Bhagat Singh

The Jail Notebook and Other Writings

Compiled, with an Introduction by
Chaman Lal

Rights:— Don't ask for rights. Take them. And don't let any one give them to you. A right that is handed to you for nothing has something the matter with it. It's more than likely it is only a wrong turned inside out.

SHOUT
SHARE
IT

Bhagat Singh spent the last two years of his life in jail, awaiting execution. During this time, he and his comrades fought one of the most celebrated court battles in the annals of national liberation struggles, and used the court as a vehicle for the propagation of their revolutionary message. They also struggled against the inhuman conditions in the colonial jail, and faced torture and pain. Their heroism made them icons and figures of inspiration for generations to come.

All this is well-known. What is not so well-known is that Bhagat Singh wrote four books in jail. Although they were smuggled out, they were destroyed and are lost forever. What survived was a Notebook that the young martyr kept in jail, full of notes and jottings from what he was reading.

In the year of his birth centenary, LeftWord is proud to present his Notebook in an elegant edition. This edition has been checked against the copy preserved in the National Archives of India. The Notebook is richly annotated by Bhupender Hooja; and the annotations have been revised and updated for this edition.

Also included are the most important texts that Bhagat Singh wrote in jail, Chamán Lal's lucid introduction, the New York *Daily Worker's* reports and Periyar's editorial on the hanging.

A volume to cherish, dip into, and be inspired by.

Revolution is the inalienable right of mankind. Freedom is the imprescriptable birth-right of all. The labourer is the real sustainer of Society. The Sovereignty of the people is the ultimate destiny of the workers.

For these ideals, and for this faith, we shall welcome any suffering to which we may be condemned. To the altar of this revolution we have brought our youth as incense; for no sacrifice is too great for so magnificent a cause.

We are content; we await the advent of the Revolution:

"Long live the Revolution."

BHAGAT SINGH

The Jail Notebook and Other Writings

BHAGAT SINGH
The Jail Note Book and other Writings

191 pages
Rs 250/-

First published in March 2007.
Reprinted June 2007, November 2007, June 2011.

Publ:
LeftWord Books
12 Rajendra Prasad Road
New Delhi 110001
INDIA
www.leftword.com

LeftWord Books is a division of
Naya Rasta Publishers Pvt. Ltd.

Bhagat Singh's Jail Notebook was first published as *A Martyr's Notebook*, edited and pressented by Bhupender Hooja, Jaipur: Indian Book Chronicle, 1994. The annotations in that edition have been updated and revised in the current edition, with the permission of Bhupender Hooja. The text of the Notebook is reproduced from "Jail Diary of Shaheed Bhagat Singh", accession no. 7422, National Archives of India, New Delhi.

"Statement Before the Session Court" reproduced from the original statement, accession no. 246, Crown vs. Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutta, National Archives of India, New Delhi.

The other writings of Bhagat Singh compiled here are from *Selected Writings of Shaheed Bhagat Singh*, edited with an Introduction by Shiv Verma, New Delhi: National Book Centre, 1986.

Appendices 1 and 2 are from the National Archives of India, acquired through Chaman Lal.

This compilation © 2007, LeftWord Books
Introduction © 2007, Chaman Lal

ISBN 978-81-87496-72-4 HC
978-81-87496-62-5 PB

Printed at
Progressive Printers
A 21 Jhilmil Industrial Area
Shahdara
Delhi 110095
INDIA

Contents

Introduction

Bhagat Singh's Jail Notebook by Chaman Lal 11

The Jail Notebook

Annotated by Bhupender Hooja 27

And Other Writings

Statement Before the Session Court 131

To Make the Deaf Hear 137

Message to Punjab Students' Conference 139

On the Slogan "Long Live Revolution" 140

Regarding Suicide 142

Letter to Father 147

Letter to B.K. Dutta 149

Letter to Jaidev Gupta 150

Introduction to *Dreamland* 151

To Young Political Workers 157

Why I am an Atheist 166

No Hanging, Please Shoot Us 178

Letter to the Second Lahore Conspiracy Case Convicts 181

Appendices

Appendix 1

Labour Gov't Executes 3 Indian Rebels 185

Appendix 2

75 Killed; 500 Hurt by Labour Gov't Soldiers 187

Appendix 3

Editorial, *Kudi Arasu*, by Periyar E.V. Ramasami 189

INTRODUCTION

Bhagat Singh's Jail Notebook

Chaman Lal

> Bhagat Singh dead, will be more dangerous to the British enslavers than Bhagat Singh alive. After I am hanged, the fragrance of my revolutionary ideas will permeate the atmosphere of this beautiful land of ours. It will intoxicate the youth and make him mad for freedom and revolution, and that, will bring the doom of the British imperialists nearer. This is my firm conviction.
>
> Bhagat Singh, quoted by Shiv Verma
> Introduction to *The Selected Writings of Bhagat Singh*

The threat of imperialism, led by the United States in the company of the United Kingdom and Israel, looms large over the entire world. In Afghanistan, Iraq and Lebanon, this threat has taken a direct military form over the past few years. Countries like Iran and North Korea are being bullied daily, while others like Cuba and Venezuela have faced conspiracies of various kinds over the last several years. Several other nations, India included, face pressure to frame domestic and international policies in line with what the imperialist master dictates. In these difficult and challenging times, one's thoughts turn to Bhagat Singh and Che Guevara, who both fought against colonialism and imperialism uncompromisingly. Both were fearless and unflinching in their dedication to the cause of the oppressed. Separated by nearly half a century and several thousand miles, the two are yet united in their heroic martyrdom, which continues to inspire millions worldwide. While Che is deservedly a global icon for revolutionaries and other progressive forces, for various reasons Bhagat Singh remains relatively obscure outside India. His struggle against British colonialism, his life and his thoughts deserve to be better known, for they hold out lessons to the oppressed all over the planet.

On April 8, 1929, Bhagat Singh and Batu Keshwar Dutta threw harmless bombs in what is today the Parliament of India, then the Central Assembly. The slogans they shouted, 'Inqilab Zindabad' ('Long Live Revolution') and 'Down with Imperialism', caught the imagination of the Indian people. The slogans themselves arose out of a qualitative change in the nature of the anti-colonial movement, with the entry, on a mass scale, of the working people and the poor. The new slogans replaced 'Bande Mataram' ('Mother, I Bow to

Thee'), from the earlier phase of the national movement. This was a change not simply at the linguistic level, from a Sanskritic slogan to Hindustani-English, but at the level of consciousness itself, from a kind of proto Hindu nationalism to a more inclusive secular and socialist consciousness. The catalyst of this change – or, at any rate, its most visible and charismatic representative – was Bhagat Singh, who had reached the conclusion that it is not enough to simply 'free mother India from the chains of foreign slavery', it was important to understand, and fight, the larger system that produces slavery in the first place. This understanding would help formulate correct strategies and tactics in the revolutionary struggle against imperialism.

Bhagat Singh was born on September 28, 1907 at Chak no. 105 of Lyallpur Banga, now in Pakistan. The day of his birth brought good news: his father Kishan Singh and two uncles, the revolutionary Ajit Singh and young Swarn Singh, incarcerated in British jails, were released. Swarn Singh had contracted tuberculoses in jail, and died shortly after his release, at the age of 24. Ajit Singh was the founder of the Bharat Mata Society ('Mother India Society') along with Lala Lajpat Rai. Ajit Singh was also a peasant organizer, and was forced to leave the country in 1909, when Bhagat Singh was a child of two. Ajit Singh returned to India a full 38 years later, as India was on the verge of independence. In fact, he died in Dalhousie the day India became independent, on August 15, 1947. Ajit Singh had spent his intervening years in exile, mostly in Latin America, working with networks of Indian revolutionaries abroad. Ajit Singh was aware of his young nephew's revolutionary activities, and tried to persuade him to leave the country. The veteran Ghadarite revolutionary Baba Bhagat Singh Bilga, who lived in Argentina in the 1930s, told the present writer that Ajit Singh had three letters of Bhagat Singh with him. These letters, given to someone for safe custody, were lost – as indeed were other documents sent from jail by Bhagat Singh prior to his execution.

The anecdotes and stories around Bhagat Singh's childhood have passed into legend. As a child of four, he told well-known freedom fighter Mehta Anand Kishore that he would sow rifles in the fields, so that trees would yield weapons, with which the British could be driven away. In April 1919, as a boy of 12, he visited the Jallianwala Bagh where the British police had massacred thousands of unarmed Indians only days before, and came back with blood soaked earth. In 1921, at age 14, he was telling his grandfather about the preparations being made by railway men to go on strike. The same year, on February 4, more than 140 devout Sikhs had been killed by Mahant Narain Dass in collaboration with the British at Gurudwara Nankana Sahib.

When Akali workers protested this massacre, Bhagat Singh was at the forefront of welcoming the protestors in his village. Bhagat Singh joined National College Lahore at the age of 15. Around this time, he learnt Punjabi language and the Gurumukhi script. This may seem strange today, given that he was born a Sikh. However, his grandfather, S. Arjan Singh, was a staunch Arya Samajist, and he emphasized learning Sanskrit. So young Bhagat Singh learnt Sanskrit, in addition to Urdu, English and Hindi.

It is well-known that Bhagat Singh's father wanted to marry the boy off, so that he stayed away from revolutionary activities. However, Bhagat Singh was gripped by patriotic fervour. He was also very sensitive to the plight of the two women in the house who lived without their husbands – the dead Swarn Singh's widow, and the exiled Ajit Singh's wife – and was determined not to let the same happen to any girl who might marry him. He was particularly attached to Ajit Singh's wife, Harnam Kaur. According to Bhagat Singh's classmate Jaidev Gupta, whose reminiscences are available at the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library in Delhi, Bhagat Singh was given to Harnam Kaur as a surrogate son, since she herself was childless. Bhagat Singh felt himself close to Ajit Singh, whose ideas on India's freedom were far more advanced than those of the Congress, although he had never lived with him. Ajit Singh argued for organizing the peasantry on an anti-feudal, anti-colonial platform. In one sense, Bhagat Singh's development on the Marxist path was a logical next step to this.

Already at 15, Bhagat Singh was debating with his father Mahatma Gandhi's decision to withdraw the Non-Cooperation Movement after the Chauri Chaura deaths in 1922. Withdrawal of Non-Cooperation had disillusioned many youth all over India. In the coming years as well, none of the revolutionaries maintained close contact with Gandhi; in fact most of them polemicized against him. Including, as a matter of fact, Chandrasekhar Azad, who had earlier received punishment by flogging because he shouted the slogan 'Mahatma Gandhi ki Jai' ('Victory to Mahatma Gandhi'). Years later, as they awaited execution, Bhagat Singh's comrade Sukhdev had written a letter to Gandhi, which reached him only after the execution. As a result, *Young India* carried Gandhi's response to it when it was too late.

There is no doubt though that withdrawal of Non-Cooperation had the effect of radicalizing the youth, sections of which were already attracted to Anushilan and Yugantar in Bengal or the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA) in the United Provinces (UP). Bhagat Singh came to Kanpur in 1923, after writing to his father that he would not marry, since his life was dedicated

to the nation. His teacher in National College, Jai Chander Vidyalankar, had given him a letter of introduction for UP Congress leader Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, also editor of *Pratap*. Bhagat Singh joined the paper as well as HRA. He was already acquainted with HRA organizer Sachindra Nath Sanyal in Lahore. Sachindra Nath Sanyal was a committed revolutionary and author of *Bandi Jivan*, his book on his term in the dreaded Andaman Cellular Jail. In Kanpur Bhagat Singh met other revolutionaries: Bejoy Kumar Sinha, Shiv Verma, Jaidev Kapoor, Batu Keshwar Dutta, Ajoy Ghosh, and others. Sukhdev and Bhagwati Charan Vohra were already his comrades in Lahore.

Bhagat Singh started writing in the *Pratap* under the pen name Balwant. He worked during flood relief, and also did duty as headmaster in a school. He wrote, in Hindi, an essay on the language problem in Punjab, and won a prize for this essay in a competition. In 1924–25, he wrote two essay in *Matwala*: one on 'Loving the World' ('*Vishwa Prem*') and another on the youth ('*Yuvak*'). When six Babbar Akali revolutionaries were executed in 1926, his article 'Blood Drops on Holi Day' ('*Holi ke Din Rakt ke Chhinte*') was published with the byline 'A Punjabi Youth'. In his celebrated essay 'Why I am an Atheist', written in 1930, Bhagat Singh says that this was the time he was being radicalized, and by the end of 1926, still short of 19, he was already an atheist.

An important factor in his intellectual and political growth was his access of the Dwarka Dass Library, Lahore, which had started acquiring Marxist literature in the mid-1920s. He was clearly groping for a comprehensive philosophy of human liberation. This led him to Marxism. This quest was helped by the Ghadarite revolutionaries of Punjab. Bhagat Singh wrote regularly in their organ, *Kirti* (Punjabi), on subjects as varied as 'Communalism and its Solution', 'Problem of Untouchability', 'Religion and Our Freedom Struggle', etc. By 1928, Bhagat Singh, along with Sukhdev and Bhagwati Charan Vohra in Punjab and Bejoy Kumar Sinha, Shiv Verma and Jaidev Kapoor in UP, was becoming convinced that a truly revolutionary party must have a socialist agenda. To clarify what this could be, a meeting of the Central Committee of the HRA was held on September 8 and 9, 1928, at the historic Ferozeshah Kotla in Delhi. Here, after long deliberations, at Bhagat Singh's suggestion, the HRA added 'socialist' to its name and became HSRA. This had the sanction of Chandrasekhar Azad as well who, although he was not very well-read, trusted Bhagat Singh implicitly. This addition of 'socialist' to the name of the organization was not populist or ornamental, as in the case of Indira Gandhi's so-called 'socialist' turn in the early 1970s, but signaled a

genuine and qualitative transformation in the consciousness of the most advanced sections of the Indian youth.

Bhagat Singh was already something of a veteran in running organizations. He had been central to the Naujawan Bharat Sabha, formed in 1926 on the pattern of youth organizations in Italy inspired by Mazzini and Garibaldi. Bhagat Singh was general secretary of the Sabha and Bhagwati Charan Vohra propaganda secretary. Among the more innovative techniques used by the Sabha was to organize lantern shows of patriots' pictures. They were particularly inspired by Kartar Singh Sarabha, executed in Lahore in 1915 at the age of 19. Bhagat Singh always carried Sarabha's picture in his pocket, and the Sabha would garland his picture in every public meeting.

Bhagat Singh came in contact with revolutionaries and communists fairly early. Many Ghadarite revolutionaries returned from Moscow at this time, trained in Marxism at the Eastern University. Santokh Singh started *Kirti*, a Punjabi journal, and after his untimely death, Sohan Singh Josh became its editor. Bhagat Singh wrote in the journal, and even formally joined the staff for a while. Later, in Kanpur, he came in touch with some of the earliest communists, men like Satyabhakta, Radha Mohan Gokulji, Shaukat Usmani, etc. He also mentions having met one of the tallest early communist leaders, Muzaffar Ahmad, in Kanpur. In other words, one can argue that even though he wasn't part of the fledgling Communist Party of India, he was part of the communist movement fairly early on. As is evident from his jail writings, he was clear that the HSRA had to acquire a mass character, in which workers, peasants, students and other revolutionary sections had to take the lead. At the same time, they also felt that given the backwardness of the masses, they had to be roused by some spectacular revolutionary action in which the sacrifice of young men would awaken a patriotic fervour.

A significant aspect of the early organizational work done by Bhagat Singh and his associates at this time was the efforts they made to politicize school students. This unfortunately has not caught the attention of historians to the extent it should. The Naujawan Bharat Sabha formed the Bal Bharat Sabha, an organization of school children between the age of 12 and 16, and Bal Student Union. Baldev Raj, grandson of Lala Lajpat Rai, was secretary of Bal Student Union. Kahan Chand, president of the Amritsar chapter of Bal Bharat Sabha, was only 11 when he was condemned to three months' rigorous imprisonment. Another young activist, Yash, son of Mahasha Kushal Chand, who grew up to become the editor of the Urdu daily *Milap*, was similarly found guilty on three counts, including assisting the Lahore city unit of the

Congress and the Naujawan Bharat Sabha. Yash was then merely 10 years old. As a matter of fact, records indicate that a total of 1192 juveniles under the age of 15 were convicted of political activities. Of these, Punjab had 189 and Bengal 739.

Alarmed at Bhagat Singh's impact on the youth, the Lahore police arrested him in May 1927 for his involvement in the October 1926 Dussehra bomb case. He was kept in jail for about five weeks, and finally released on bail bond of Rs 60,000. Soon after this, the infamous Simon Commission came to India. The Naujawan Bharat Sabha decided to oppose the Commission. Even though Bhagat Singh and his associates had voiced their criticism on Lala Lajpat Rai in public for his association with communal elements like the Hindu Mahasabha, they still asked him to lead the protest demonstration, because there was no leader of his stature in Lahore. The demonstration was planned for October 30, 1928. Though Bhagat Singh himself was not present at the demonstration, NBS activists had formed a cordon around the Lala. In spite of this, when the lathi charge began, it was so brutal that the veteran leader could not be protected. The Superintendent of Police, Lahore, Scott, ordered the lathi charge which his deputy Saunders led personally. Lala Lajpat Rai was grievously hurt, and he died on November 17.

This led to the famous Saunders murder. The HSRA decided to avenge the death of Lala Lajpat Rai by assassinating Scott, who had ordered the lathi charge. Jai Gopal was to identify the target, Bhagat Singh and Rajguru were to be the actual shooters, and Chandrashekhar Azad was to provide cover. Jai Gopal mistakenly identified Saunders instead of Scott, and even though it was decided that Bhagat Singh would shoot first, Rajguru, never one to be left out of the action for long, shot first. Bhagat Singh realized that they had got the wrong man, and in fact shouted this out to Azad, but when he realized that Rajguru had already shot Saunders, he pumped 3 or 4 more bullets into the fallen body, to make sure that he did not survive. The following morning, the revolutionaries put up posters in Lahore owning up the act.

Azad was already underground for his involvement in the Kakori rail dacoity case. Immediately following Saunder's assassination, Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev also went underground. Bhagat Singh escaped to Calcutta with Durga Bhabhi. Here he established contact with some Bengal revolutionaries, including Jatindra Nath, who subsequently went to Lahore to train others in bomb-making.

On the one hand, the HSRA wanted to work in the open, and organize the masses in order to bring the agenda of socialism to the centre of India's

struggle for freedom; on the other hand, the Saunders assassination meant that they could only work covertly, underground. Joining the Congress was not an option either; they had too many differences with the Congress. It was clear to Bhagat Singh that his days were numbered. If and when he was finally caught by the police, he would not be allowed to live. He decided that he must perform spectacular revolutionary acts in his remaining life. The Saunders killing had already brought Bhagat Singh and his comrades to national attention. He decided that henceforth, he must work to make the country aware of the revolutionaries' goals. There is no doubt that more than anything else, the trial of Bhagat Singh and his comrades resulted in the cry 'Inqilaab Zindabad' ('Long live revolution') capturing the imagination of the nation. In achieving this, Bhagat Singh revealed himself to be a master tactician.

The British colonial government had brought in two anti-people bills, the Public Safety Bill and the Trade Disputes Bill, which they now wanted to pass as law. There was stiff opposition to this from the people, as well as from many members of the Central Assembly. The Central Committee of the HSRA decided to protest these bills by throwing bombs in the Central Assembly. It was clear from the beginning that these bombs were to be harmless, not designed to kill or injure anyone, but to create an explosion that would make the deaf hear. Bhagat Singh was keen that he should be part of this action. However, the party decided that since he was sure to be convicted in the Saunders murder case, they could not afford to lose his leadership at this time. As a result, Bhagat Singh was initially left out of the team.

Sukhdev and Bhagat Singh were close friends. Sukhdev was not present at the Central Committee meeting, and was very upset and angry at the decision, since he felt that Bhagat Singh was in fact best suited for the mission, since he could effectively project the party's views. He also taunted Bhagat Singh for being afraid of death. The Central Committee met again and decided that he would be part of the action and, at Bhagat Singh's insistence, it was further decided that the revolutionaries would not try and escape after their act, but get arrested. B.K. Dutta was to accompany Bhagat Singh in actually throwing the bombs, while Jaidev Kapoor was to accompany them till they were inside the Assembly, but come out before the bombs were actually thrown.

At the appointed time, Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutta threw the bombs over the empty seats in the Central Assembly, threw the historic pamphlet 'To Make the Deaf Hear', and shouted slogans: 'Inqilab Zindabad' and 'Samrajyavaad ka naash ho' ('Down with Imperialism'). The Assembly erupted in commotion. Members ran helter-skelter. Some hid under their tables. Only

a very few – amongst them Pandit Motilal Nehru, Madan Mohan Malviya and Jinnah – remained cool. The police were scared to arrest the two young revolutionaries, since they had pistols in their hands. It was only after they kept the pistols in front of them that the police moved in and arrested them, who kept up their slogan shouting till the end.

The action was planned very meticulously. Photographs of the two revolutionaries were kept ready, as were copies of the statement. The press got both immediately. *The Hindustan Times*, in its special evening edition the same day, published the full text of the statement. Overnight, the young revolutionaries became heroes of an entire nation. The statement proclaimed:

> "IT TAKES A LOUD VOICE TO MAKE A DEAF HEAR." With these immortal words uttered on a similar occasion by Valliant, a French anarchist martyr, do we strongly justify this action of ours.
>
> Without repeating the humiliating history of the past ten years of the working of the reforms and without mentioning the insults hurled down on the head of the Indian nation through this House, the so-called Indian Parliament, we see that this time again, while the people, expecting some more crumbs of reforms from the Simon Commission, are ever quarelling over the distribution of the expected bones, the Govt. is thrusting upon us new repressive measures like those of the Public Safety and Trades Disputes Bills, while reserving the Press Sedition Bill for the next Session. The indiscriminate arrests of labour leaders working in the open field clearly indicate whither the wind blows.
>
> In these extremely provocative circumstances the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association, in all seriousness, realizing the full responsibility, had decided and ordered its army to do this particular action so that a stop be put to this humiliating farce and to let the alien bureaucratic exploiters do what they wish but to make them come before the public eye in their naked form.
>
> Let the representatives of the people return to their constituencies and prepare the masses for the coming revolution. And let the Govt. know that, while protesting against the Public Safety and the Trades Disputes Bills and the callous murder of Lala Lajpat Rai on behalf of the helpless Indian masses, we want to emphasise the lesson often repeated by the history that it is easy to kill the individuals, but you cannot kill the ideas. Great empires crumbled but the ideas survived.

> Bourbons and Czars fell while the revolution marched ahead triumphantly.
>
> We are sorry to admit that we who attach so great a sanctity to human life, we who dream of a glorious future when man will be enjoying perfect peace and full liberty, have been forced to shed human blood. But the sacrifice of the individuals at the altar of the great revolution that will bring freedom to all rendering the exploitation of man by man impossible, is inevitable.
>
> *Long Live Revolution!*

This was a defining moment of the Indian freedom struggle. From this day, 'Inqilab Zindabad' became a common slogan of all those who dreamed of a free and just India. As was to be expected, the only forces that did not adopt this slogan were the forces of communal fundamentalism, like the Hindu Mahasabha and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), along with some Muslim fundamentalist organizations.

Bhagat Singh and his comrades had decided that they would not defend themselves in the British colonial court, but plead guilty and use the trial to broadcast their message and philosophy. They also decided that while they would accept a nationalist lawyer's advice, they would not let anyone appear on their behalf in court. In other words, they would act as their own lawyers. During the trial, they proclaimed:

> We humbly claim to be no more than serious students of the history and conditions of our country and her aspirations. We despise hypocrisy. Our practical protest was against the institution, which, since its birth, has eminently helped to display not only its worthlessness but its far-reaching power for mischief. The more we have pondered, the more deeply we have been convinced that it exists only to demonstrate to world India's humiliation and helplessness, and it symbolizes the overriding domination of an irresponsible and autocratic rule. Time and again the national demand has been pressed by the people's representatives only to find the waste paper basket as its final destination. . . . We then deliberately offered ourselves to bear the penalty for what we had done and to let the imperialist exploiters know that by crushing individuals, they cannot kill ideas. By crushing two insignificant units, a nation cannot be crushed.

When asked what they meant by the word 'revolution', they stated:

> The whole edifice of this civilization, if not saved in time, shall crumble. A radical change, therefore, is necessary and it is the duty of those who realize it to reorganize society on the socialistic basis. Unless this thing is done and the exploitation of man by man and nations by nations is brought to an end, sufferings and courage with which humanity is threatened today cannot be prevented. All talk of ending war and ushering in an era of universal peace is undisguised hypocrisy.
>
> By "Revolution", we mean the ultimate establishment of an order of society which may not be threatened by such breakdown, and in which the sovereignty of the proletariat should be recognized and a world federation should redeem humanity from the bondage of capitalism and misery of imperial wars.
>
> This is our ideal, and with this ideology as our inspiration, we have given a fair and loud enough warning.

As is evident, Bhagat Singh was clearly very close to a Marxist understanding of society and change. When Ramanand Chatterjee, editor of *Modern Review*, ridiculed the slogan 'Inqilab Zindabad', Bhagat Singh and Dutta rebutted him in a letter published in *The Tribune* of December 24, 1929:

> Revolution did not necessarily involve sanguinary strife. It was not a cult of bomb and pistol. . . . No doubt they play a prominent part in some movements, but they do not—for that very reason —become one and the same thing. A rebellion is not a revolution. It may ultimately lead to that end.
>
> The sense in which the word Revolution is used in that phrase, is the spirit, the longing for a change for the better. The people generally get accustomed to the established order of things and begin to tremble at the very idea of a change. It is this lethargical spirit that needs be replaced by the revolutionary spirit. Otherwise degeneration gains the upper hand and the whole humanity is led astray by the reactionary forces. Such a state of affairs leads to stagnation and paralysis in human progress. The spirit of Revolution should always permeate the soul of humanity, so that the reactionary forces may not accumulate (strength) to check its eternal onward march. Old order

> should change, always and ever, yielding place to new, so that one "good" order may not corrupt the world. It is in this sense that we raise the shout "Long Live Revolution".

There is a great deal of effort today by various forces to appropriate the legacy of Bhagat Singh. The mainstream nationalist historiography, and its concomitant political current, the Congress, holds him up as a selfless patriot, but totally ignores his strong anti-Congress stance. In particular, the Congress elides Bhagat Singh's Marxist ideology. Far greater injustice is done to Bhagat Singh by the Hindu Right – the RSS and its affiliates – who are also out to appropriate the revolutionary's legacy. In an effort that can only be termed obscene, the Hindu Right would have us believe that Bhagat Singh was a votary of a greater Hindu homeland and a devotee of Bharat Mata. Even a mere glance through the Notebook and other writings of Bhagat Singh is enough to expose these as lies. Among the other lies they peddle is one that claims that Bhagat Singh sought the RSS chief Hedgewar's blessings on the eve of his Assembly bomb action. Not a single shred of even remotely plausible evidence has ever been offered to back this claim; the claim therefore merely floats around as a rumour in the vain hope that with the passage of time it will be accorded status of fact.

What is incontrovertible is that Bhagat Singh was inspired by the Ghadar revolutionaries. Shiv Verma has dealt with this in great detail in his introductory essay to the *Selected Writings of Bhagat Singh*, and it unnecessary to cover the same ground here again. Suffice it to note that the name 'Ghadar' itself is a self-conscious reference to the Revolt of 1857, and that the Ghadar Party links up with the communist movement in India. It is no less significant that the Chittagong revolutionaries led by Surya Sen inherited the revolutionary traditions of Bengal, but turned decisively away from the Hindu revivalist platform towards communism. Many of the Chittagong revolutionaries who survived went on to become leaders of the Communist Party, like Ganesh Ghosh, Kalpana Dutt and Subodh Roy. As Bhagat Singh's Jail Notebook testifies, there was a common set of ideals that inspired the Ghadarites, Bhagat Singh's comrades and the Chittagong revolutionaries: the ideals of liberty, equality, and socialism. In other words, the best ideals of the French and Russian revolutions. It is for this reason that we find Bhagat Singh reading thinkers like Rousseau, Marx and Lenin so closely in jail.

Bhagat Singh had three main agendas in jail: (1) to use the trial and the publicity it was getting to spread the revolutionaries' ideas and message; (2) to expose the inhumanity and brutality of the colonial state by resorting to

protests, including hunger strikes, inside the jail; and (3) to develop himself ideologically and politically by undertaking a rigorous and serious programme of reading. It is well-known that he was spectacularly successful in the first two. What is often missed is how hard he worked and to what extent he succeeded in the third.

Bhagat Singh's comrade in jail and later editor of his *Selected Works*, Shiv Verma, records that Bhagat Singh prepared four manuscripts in jail: (1) The Idea of Socialism; (2) Autobiography; (3) History of the Revolutionary Movement in India; and (4) At the Door of Death. It is not clear if Verma actually read or saw these manuscripts, or simply heard Bhagat Singh saying that he is working on them. However, clearly Bhagat Singh did write something, and what he wrote was smuggled out of the jail by Kumari Lajjawati of Jalandhar. Lajjawati was secretary of the Bhagat Singh Defence Committee and a Congress activist. She visited Lahore jail frequently to discuss the legal aspects of the case. Lajjawati showed the papers to Feroze Chand, editor of *People*, the Lahore paper established by Lala Lajpat Rai. Feroze Chand was to publish selections from these writings in his paper. This is how the celebrated essay 'Why I am an Atheist' was published after his execution on September 27, 1931, his first birth anniversary. Earlier, on March 29, days after the execution on March 23, the paper published extracts from 'Letter to Young Political Workers'. In an interview to the oral history archive of the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library in Delhi, Lajjawati says that she handed over the bulk of the papers to Bejoy Kumar Sinha in 1938, after his release from the Andaman prison. Sinha apparently passed them on to another unnamed friend, who, however, destroyed them, fearing a police raid. The loss of these invaluable documents must surely rank as one of the great tragedies of the period. Bhagat Singh's father was keen to acquire the papers, or at least to see them. Lajjawati refused to give them to him, purportedly on Bhagat Singh's own instructions. We must consider ourselves fortunate that some member of his family, probably Kulbir Singh, managed to retrieve Jail Notebook, reprinted here in its entirety.

Bhagat Singh was in jail for some two years – from April 8, 1929, to March 23, 1931. During this time, he was engaged in agitation inside the jail, as well as preparing for the trial. Given this, it seems unlikely that he could have actually finished writing four full-fledged books, even considering his enormous energy and willpower. Of the four titles Verma gives, two are clearly interlinked and autobiographical in nature, while the other two are more general surveys. One doesn't know, and one will probably never know, how extensive these writings were. However, it is reasonably certain that

Bhagat Singh planned to write a full-fledged book on the science of the state, for we find in the Jail Notebook detailed notes on this. This work was to have traced the growth of the State from primitive communism to modern socialism. We have lost the book that Bhagat Singh is purported to have written, but we have, in the form of his Jail Notebook, the notes he used to write the book, and the careful reader of the Notebook will doubtless be able to make out the general trend of his argument.

It is for this reason that what has come to be called the Jail Notebook of Bhagat Singh is a document of great interest and importance. Edited by Bhupinder Hooja, it was first published in 1994. Bhagat Singh's Jail Notebook, however, is quite different from the *Prison Notebooks* of the Italian communist Antonio Gramsci, or the *Philosophical Notebooks* of Lenin, or even the diaries of Che Guevara. Bhagat Singh's notebook is not a diary at all in the conventional sense, in that it does not record his daily life in the prison, nor his thoughts and emotions. Bhagat Singh's Jail Notebook is a record of his study and reading in the prison prior to his execution. It helps us understand the roots and trajectory of his political and philosophical growth and development. It also reflects his aesthetic taste and sensibilities, as it contains a large number of quotations from literary classics from across the world. As a student, his friends remembered him as being fond of films, especially Charlie Chaplin's films. He is said to have been a good singer and actor, and took part in college plays. He was a voracious reader – as the Jail Notebook testifies, and had a fine understanding of literature. Indeed, the senior revolutionary Ram Saran Dass asked him to write an introduction to his poetry collection, *Dreamland*.

Long before the Jail Notebook became well-known in India, the Soviet scholar L.V. Mitrokhin discussed it in detail in his 1981 book, *Lenin and India*, the Hindi translation of which was published in 1990. Mitrokhin devotes an entire chapter to 'The Last Days of Bhagat Singh'. An earlier article, by A.V. Raikov, 'Bhagat Singh and his Ideological Legacy' (1971), as well as Mitrokhin's own article of the same year, 'The Books Read by Bhagat Singh', were some of the earliest studies of the Jail Notebook. These Soviet scholars assessed Bhagat Singh's ideological development quite objectively and placed him within the Marxist tradition. Bhagat Singh's great admiration for Lenin is well-known. In fact, when the time came to take him to the gallows on the last day of his life, he was reading Lenin. The revolutionary poet Avatar Singh Pash, slain by extremists many years later, paid tribute to Bhagat Singh by saying that the Indian youth needed to read the next page of the book that Bhagat Singh closed as he went to meet his death.

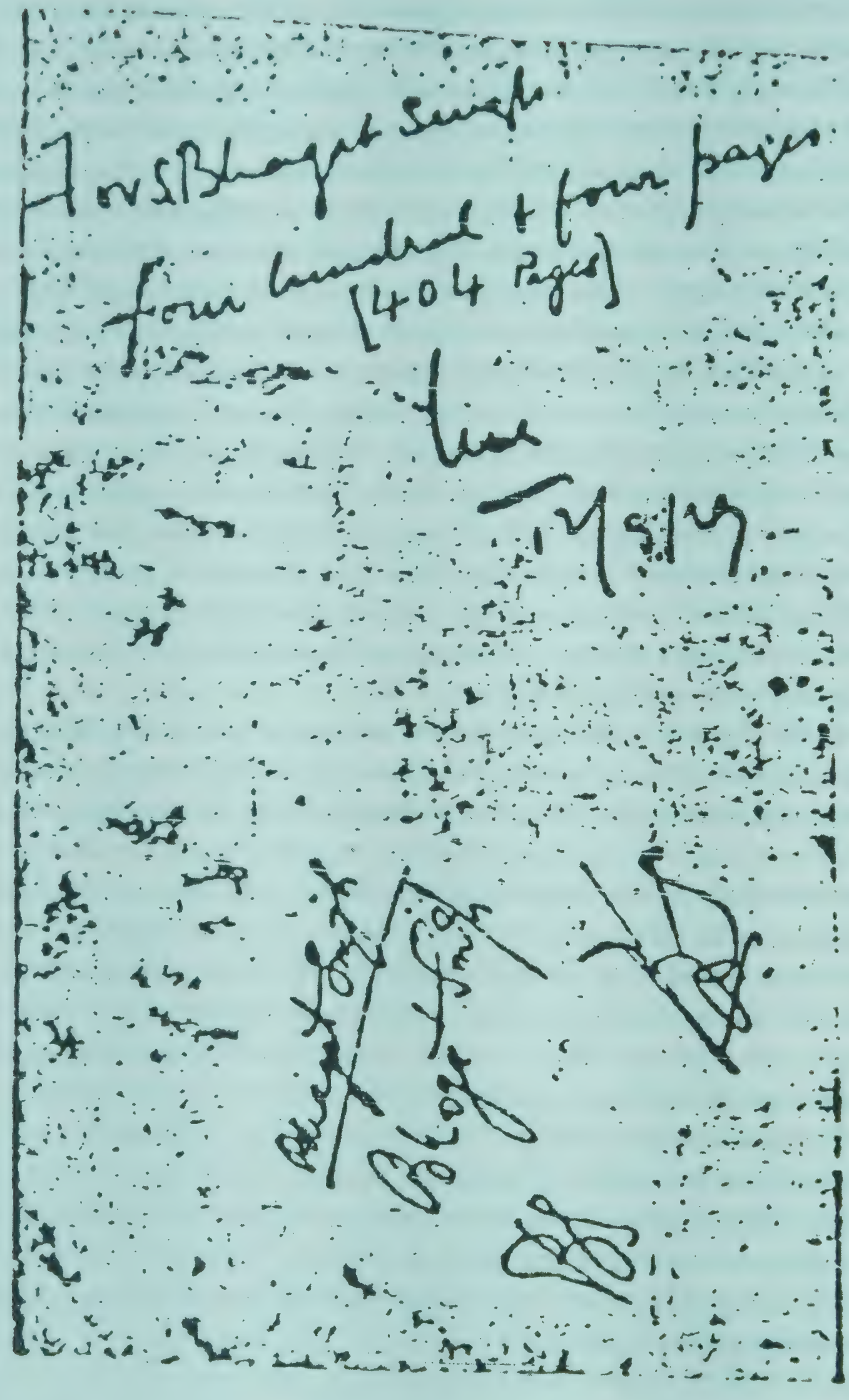
The present author saw the manuscript of the Jail Notebook for the first time in 1984 at the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML), which had acquired it from Bhagat Singh's younger brother Kulbir Singh, with the condition that the Notebook not be published. I started writing about the Jail Notebook in Hindi journals, especially regretting its non-publication, and in 1992 the late Bhupinder Hooja started serializing it in his monthly *Indian Book Chronicle* from Jaipur. He subsequently published it with his editorial notes in 1994. The publication got some good reviews, but did not get circulated as much as it should have. Funnily enough, though Bhagat Singh's Notebook is in English and Hooja's edited volume was also in English, the Notebook was rapidly translated into Hindi and some other Indian languages, and began to be published here and there. Sadly however, the tremendous hard work that Hooja had put in to annotate the Notebook was neither acknowledged nor credited in many translations. The present publication of the Jail Notebook, to coincide with Bhagat Singh's birth centenary, will hopefully rectify the balance and bring both the Notebook itself as well as the editor Bhupinder Hooja to the attention of historians, scholars and activists interested in the history of the revolutionary movement in India. It should also be emphasized that the Jail Notebook needs to be read alongside Bhagat Singh's finished works from prison, for it is only in conjunction to each other that both the Notebook as well as the other writings acquire depth of meaning. This is the reason why the present volume contains both.

For this edition, Sudhanva Deshpande, editor at LeftWord Books, has revised Hooja's annotations, corrected inaccuracies, and filled in some of the gaps in the original. Without doubt, the present edition will become the standard text which scholars, students and activists will turn to in their effort to understand the life and thought of Bhagat Singh.

Rajguru, Sukhdev and Bhagat Singh's hanging was nothing but judicial murder – and that too performed in a hurry, with the colonial state clearly in a state of panic. The Naujawan Bharat Sabha had organized a big rally in Lahore on the March 23, apprehending that the three revolutionaries would be hanged the following morning. To preempt the crowd coming to the jail, the British authorities decided to carry out the death sentence at 7 in the evening – contrary to established international norms, where executions are carried out at dawn. The bodies of the revolutionaries were hurriedly butchered, cut into pieces, stuffed in gunny sacks and smuggled out of the back gate of the jail to the banks of the river Sutlej, where they were burnt and destroyed. The revolutionaries were not even granted the dignity of a proper farewell or last rites by their families, comrades, and admirers.

However, news of the hanging spread like wildfire. On the same night, people located the soft spot in the earth where the British had tried to bury the remains of the revolutionaries. They took whatever remains could be found there and gave the revolutionaries a proper cremation on the banks of the river Ravi, where earlier Lala Lajpat Rai had been cremated. The Congress party had instituted a fact finding committee to investigate how the British had desecrated the martyrs' bodies, but strangely, the report of the committee was never brought to light. There were communal riots in Kanpur after the execution of the revolutionaries, and resulted in the death of Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi. While the National Book Trust has recently published the report of the Kanpur riots, the report of the fact finding committee remains obscure. We publish here, as an Appendix, a report on the Kanpur riots that appeared in the *Daily Worker* of New York on March 27, 1931. Also reproduced is the first report of the hanging of the revolutionaries that appeared in the paper two days previously. The third appendix is Periyar's editorial on the hanging, published in the Tamil paper *Kudi Arasu* on March 29. In north India in particular, Periyar's writings are not so well known, and I doubt how many people are aware of this editorial.

There is no fitting memorial for the martyrs at Lahore. The Naujawan Bharat Sabha had set up a memorial committee, but the Congress managed to sabotage this by promising Bhagat Singh's father, Kishan Singh, that it would erect a memorial to his son and his comrades. The memorial that was eventually built near Ferozepur had virtually no connection to the freedom struggle or to the revolutionaries it was supposed to pay tribute to. The fact is that Lahore was the city where Bhagat Singh came to prominence, where he did some of his most important work, where he was imprisoned, and eventually hanged and cremated. Lahore is where a memorial to Bhagat Singh and his comrades ought to be created. It is also noteworthy that of all the heroes of the freedom movement, Bhagat Singh evokes awe and admiration on both sides of the border equally. As the people of India and Pakistan extend hands of friendship and fraternity towards each other, the figure of Bhagat Singh has the potential of uniting people over a divided land. There can perhaps be no better tribute to the memory of this outstanding revolutionary as we celebrate the centenary of his birth.



PA-106/97 Pt II

THE JAIL

NOTEBOOK

ANNOTATED BY BHUPENDER HOOJA

Annotations updated and revised by Sudhanva Deshpande

From "Jail Diary of Shaheed Bhagat Singh",

National Archives of India, New Delhi

Land Measurements:

German 20 hectares—50 acres i.e. 1 hectare = 2 ½ acres[1]

PAGE 6

Freedom from Property

The "freedom of property". . . as far as the small capitalist and peasant proprietors are concerned, became "freedom from property."

Marriage itself remained, as before, the legally recognised form, the official cloak, of prostitution . . .

(S'ism Scientific and Utopian)[2]

Mental Bondage

"An eternal being created human society as it is today, and submission to 'superior' and 'authority' is imposed on the 'lower' classes by divine will." This suggestion, coming from pulpit, platform and press, has hypnotised the minds of men and proves to be one of the strongest pillars of exploitation."

(Translator's Preface to Origin of the Family)[3]

PAGE 7

The Origin of the Family
by Engels

Morgan was the first to make an attempt at introducing a logical order into the history of primeval society.

He divides it into three main epochs:

(1) Savagery, (2) Barbarism, (3) Civilization

1. Savagery re-divided into three stages:

1. Lower 2. Middle 3. Higher.

1. Lower Stage of Savagery: Infancy of human race. Living in trees. (2) Fruits, nuts and roots serving as food (3) The formation of articulated speech is the principal result of that period.

2. Middle Stage: 1. Fire discovered. 2. Fish being used as food. 3. Hunting stone implements invented. 4. Cannibalism comes into existence.[4]

1 This short and odd entry on page 2 of the Notebook is difficult to explain.
2 *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific* by Frederick Engels.
3 *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* by Frederick Engels. The notes on the evolution of society and marriage below are from here.
4 Marginal note in the original: Venison = animal flesh taken by hunting.

3. Higher Stage: 1. Bow and arrow, No pottery. 2. Village Settlements. 3. Timber used for building. 4. Cloth weaved.

Bows and arrows were for the stage of savagery what the iron sword was for barbarism and the fire arm for civilisation, the weapon of supremacy.

PAGE 8

2. Barbarism:

1. Lower Stage

1. Introduction of pottery. At first wooden pots were covered with layers of earth, but afterwards earthen pots were discovered.

2. Human races divided into two distinct classes: (i) Eastern who tamed animals and had grain; (ii) Western who had only 'corn'.

2. Middle Stage

1. (a) Western hemisphere: i.e. in America they grew food plants, (cultivation and irrigation), and baked bricks for house-building.

(b) Eastern: They domesticated animals for milk and flesh. No cultivation in this stage yet.

3. Higher Stage:

1. Melting of iron ore.

2. Invention of letter script and its utilisation for writing records. This stage is richer in inventions. This is the period of Greek heroes.

3. Iron ploughs are drawn by animals to grow corn on a large scale.

4. Clearing of forests, and iron axe and iron spade used.

5. Great attainments: (i) Improved iron tools, (ii) the bellows, (iii) handmill, (iv) Potter's wheel, (v) Preparation of oil and wine, (vi) fashioning metals, (vii) wagon and chariot, (viii) ship building,

PAGE 9

(ix) Artistic Architecture, (x) Towns and forts built, (xi) Homeric Epochs and entire mythology.

With these attainments, Greeks enter the third stage—the "civilisation"!

To sum up:

1. Savagery: Time of predominating appropriation of finished natural products; human ingenuity invents mainly tools useful in assisting this appropriation.

2. Barbarism: Time of acquiring knowledge of cattle raising, of agriculture and of new methods for increasing the productivity of nature by human agency.

3. Civilisation: Time of learning a wider utilisation of natural products, of manufacturing and of art.

We have, then, three main forms of the family corresponding in general to the three main stages of human development:

1. For savagery: "group marriage"
2. For barbarism: the pairing family
3. For civilisation: monogamy supplemented by adultery and prostitution.

Between the pairing family and monogamy, in the higher stage of barbarism, the rule of men over female slaves and polygamy is inserted.

pp. 90

PAGE 10

Defects of Marriage

Especially a long engagement is in nine cases out ten, a perfect training school of adultery.

pp. 91

Socialistic Revolution and Marriage Institution!

We are now approaching a social revolution, in which the old economic foundations of monogamy will disappear just as surely as those of its complement prostitution. Monogamy arose through the concentration of considerable wealth in one hand,—a man's hand—and from the endeavour to bequeath this wealth to the children of this man to the exclusion of all others. This necessitated monogamy on the woman's, but not on the man's part. Hence this monogamy of women in no way hindered open or secret polygamy of women.

Now the impending social revolution will reduce this whole case of the heritance to a minimum by changing at least the overwhelming part of permanent and inheritable wealth—the means of production—into social property. Since monogamy was caused by economic conditions, will it disappear when these causes are abolished?

pp. 91

PAGE 11

"Ah, my Beloved, fill the cup that clears
Today of past Regrets and future Fears—
Tomorrow?—Why, Tomorrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n Thousand Years.

Here with a loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,
A Flask of Wine, a Book of verse—and Thou
Beside me signing in the Wilderness—
And Wilderness is Paradise now!

Umar Khayyam

State

The State presupposes a public power of coersion separated from the aggregate body of its members.

(Engels) pp. 116

Origin of State

. . . Degeneration of the old feuds between tribes—a regular mode of existing by systematic plundering on land and sea for the purpose of acquiring cattle, slaves and treasures. ..In short, wealth is praised and respected as the highest treasure, and the old gentile institutions are abused in order to justify the forcible robbery of wealth. Only one thing was missing: an institution that not only secured the newly acquired property of private individuals against the communistic tradition of the gens, that not only declared as sacred the formerly so despised private property and represented the protection of this sacred property as the highest purpose of human society, but that also stamped the gradually developing new forms of acquiring property of constantly increasing wealth with the universal sanction of the society. An institution

PAGE 12

that lent the character of perpetuity not only to the newly rising division into classes, but also to the right of the possessing classes to exploit and rule the nonpossessing classes.

And this institution was found. The State arose.

pp. 129-130

Definition of a Good Government

"Good government can never be a substitute for self-government."

Henry Campbell Bannerman[5]

"We are convinced that there is only one form of Government, whatever it

[5] The Rt. Hon. Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman (1836–1908), British liberal statesman who served as Prime Minister between 1905 and 1908.

may be called, namely, where the ultimate control is in the hands of the people".

"Earl of Balfour"[6]

Religion

"My own view of religion is that of Lucretius. I regard it as a disease born of fear, and as source of untold miserv to the human race. I cannot, however, deny that it has made some contributions to civilisation. It helped in-early days to fix the calendar and it caused the Egyptian priest to chronicle eclipses with such care that in time they became able to predict them. These two services, I am prepared to acknowledge, but I do not know of any other.

Bertrand Russell[7]

PAGE 13

Benevolent Despotism

Montague-Chelsmford[8] called the British Government a 'benevolent despotism' and according to Ramsay Macdonald,[9] the Imperialist leader of the British Labour Party, "in all attempts to govern a country by a 'benevalent despotism', the governed are crushed down. They become subjects who obey, not citizens who act. Their literature, their art, their spiritual expression go."

Govt. of India

Rt. Hon'ble Edwin S. Montague, Secretary of State for India, said in the House of Commons in 1917: "The Government of India is too wooden, too

6 Probably Arthur James, 1st Earl of Balfour (1848–1930) British Stateman & Prime Minister (1902–1905).

7 Bertrand Arthur William Russell, 3rd Earl Russel (1872–1972), well-known British philosopher and pacifist spokesman. Awarded Nobel Prize for Literature (1950).

8 The Montague-Chelmsford Report (1918) for constitutional reforms in India led to dyarchy under the Government of India Act, 1919. Edwin Samuel Montague (1879–1924) was the Secretary of State in the India Office (1917 to 1922), while Lord Chelmsford—Frederick John (Napier Thesiger, 3rd Lord and 1st Viscount (1868–1933)—was the Viceroy of India (1916–1920) during a hectic period of political strife.

9 James Ramsay Macdonald (1866–1937), British politician and labour leader who helped form the British Labour Party (1900) and led its Parliamentary wing in the House of Commons (1911–1914, and again from 1923 and in 1929). Was Prime Minister twice (from January to November 1924, and from 1929–1935). Author of several books on socialism and allied themes, which came out between 1905 and 1921.

iron, two metallic, too antediluvian, to be of any use for modern purposes. The Indian Government is indefensible."

British Rule in India

Dr. Ruthford's[10] words: "British Rule as it is carried on in India is the lowest and most immoral system of government in the world—the exploitation of one nation by another."

Liberty & English People

"The English people love liberty for themselves. They hate all acts of injustice, except those which they themselves commit. They are such liberty-loving people that they interfere in the Congo and cry, "Shame" to the Belgians. But they forget their heels are on the neck of India.

An Irish Author

PAGE 14

Mob Retaliation

. . . Let us therefore, examine how men came by the idea of punishing in this manner.

They learn it from the Governments they live under, and retaliate the punishment they have been accustomed to behold. The heads stuck upon spikes, which remained for years upon Temple Bar, differed nothing in the horror of the scene from those carried about upon spikes at Paris; yet this was done by the English Government. It may perhaps be said that it signifies nothing to a man what is done to him after he is dead; but it signifies much to the living; it either tortures their feelings or hardens their hearts, and in either case, it instructs them how to punish when power falls into their hands.

Lay then the axe to the root, and teach Governments humanity. It is their sanguinary punishments which corrupt mankind . . . The effect of these cruel spectacles exhibited to the populace is to destroy tenderness or excite revenge, and by the base and false idea of governing men by terror instead of reason, they become precedents."

(Rights of Man, pp. 32, T. Paine)[11]

10 Identity not clear.

11 Thomas Paine, English author and publicist (1737–1809) known for his significant contributions to the American War of Independence and the French Revolution.

PAGE 15

Monarch and Monarchy

It was not against Louis XVI but against despotic principles of government, that the Nation revolted. The principles had not their origin in him, but in the original establishment, many centuries back, and they were become too deeply rooted to be removed, and the Augean stable of parasites and plunderers too abominably filthy to be cleaned by anything short of a complete revolution. When it becomes necessary to do a thing, the whole heart and soul should go into the measure, or not attempt it. . . .The Monarch and the Monarchy were distinct and separate things; and it was against the person or principales of the former, that the revolt commenced and the Revolution has been carried.

(pp. 19)[12]

Natural and Civil Rights

Man did not enter into society to become worse than he was before, but to have those rights better secured. His natural rights are the foundation of all his civil rights.

Natural rights are those which appertain to man in right of his existence (intellectual—mental etc.)

Civil rights are those that appertain to man in right of his being a member of society.

(pp. 44)[13]

PAGE 16

King's Salary

It Is inhuman to talk of a million sterling a year, paid out of the public taxes of any country, for the support of an individual, whilst thousands who are forced to contribute thereto, are pining with want and struggling with misery. *Govt does not consist in a contract between prisons and palaces*,[14] between poverty and pomp; it is not instituted to rob the needy of his mite and increase the worthlessness of the wretched.

p. 204

12 From Thomas Paine's *The Rights of Man*. Source not indicated in Notebook, however.

13 Ibid.

14 Underlined in the original.

"Give me Liberty or Death"

It is in vain, Sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry, peace, peace—but there is no peace. The war is actually begun. The next gale that sweeps from the North . . . to our ears the clash of resounding arms. Our brethren are already in the field. Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so a dear or peace so sweet as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, almighty God! I know not what course others may take. As for me, give me "liberty or death".

Patrick Henry[15]

Right of Labour

"Whoever produces anything by weary labour does not need revelation from heaven to teach him that he has a right to the thing produced."

Robert G. Ingersoll[16]

PAGE 17

"We consider it horrible that people should have their heads cut off, but we have not been taught to see the horror of life-long death which is inflicted upon a whole population by poverty and tyranny."

Mark Twain[17]

Anarchists

". . .The Anarchists and the apostles of insurrection are also represented; and if some of the things seem to the reader the mere unchaining of furies, I would say, let him not blame the faithful anthologist, let him not blame even the writer—let him blame himself, who has acquiesced in the existence of conditions which have driven his fellowmen to extremes of madness and despair."

Upton Sinclair,[18] Preface 19
Cry for Justice

The Old Labourer

". . . He (the old labourer out of employment) was struggling against age, against nature, against circumstances; the entire weight of society, law and

15 Patrick Henry (1736–1790), American politician, orator and legislator.
16 U.S. lawyer, public speaker and author (1832–1899).
17 Pen-name of Samuel Langhorne Clemens (1835–1910), American novelist and radical humorist. Source of this quote unclear.
18 Upton Sinclair (1878–1968), U.S. journalist, novelist and radical, author of over 90 books. The following several quotes appear to be from this work.

order pressed upon him to force him to lose his self-respect and liberty . . .. He knocked at the doors of the farms and found good in man only—not in law and order, but in individual man alone."

Richard Jefferies (80)[19]

PAGE 18

Poor Labourers

". . . And we, the men who braved this task were outcasts of the world. A blind fate, a vast merciless mechanism, cut and shaped the fabric of our existence. We were men despised when we were most useful, rejected when we were not needed, and forgotten when our troubles weighed upon us heavily. We were the men sent out to fight the spirit of the wastes, rob it of all its primeval horrors and batter down the barriers of its world-old defences. Where we were working, a new town would spring up some day; it was already springing up, and then, if one of us walked there, 'a man with no fixed address,' he would be taken up and tried as a loiterer and vagrant."

From Children of the Dead End by Patrick Macgill[20] C. J., 48

Morality

"Morality and religion are but words to him who fishes in gutters for the means of sustaining life, and crouches behind barrels in the street for shelter from the cutting blasts of a winter night."

Horace Greeley 128[21]

Hunger

"It is desirable for a ruler that no man should suffer from cold and hunger under his rule. Man cannot maintain his standard of morals when he has no ordinary means of living."

Konko Hoshi, Buddhist Monk of Japan, 14th century, p. 135.

PAGE 19

Freedom

Men!—Whose boast it is that ye
Come of fathers, brave and free,

19 English naturalist and novelist (1848–1887).
20 Patrick Macgill (1889–1963), Irish journalist, poet, novelist.
21 American journalist and statesman (1811–1872).

If there breathe on earth a slave,
Are ye truly free and brave?

If you do not feel the chain
When it works a brother's pain,
Are ye not base slaves indeed,
Slaves unworthy to be freed?

Is true Freedom but to break
Fetters for our own dear sake,
And, with leathern hearts, forget
That we owe mankind a debt?
No! True Freedom is to share
All the chains our brothers wear,
And, with heart and hand, to be
Earnest to make others free!

They are slaves who fear to speak
For the fallen and the weak;
They are slaves who will not choose
Hatred, scoffing and abuse,
Rather than in silence shrink
From the truth they needs must think;
They are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three.

James Russell Lowell[22] p. 189

PAGE 20

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.[23]

[22] James Russell Lowell (1819–91), American poet essayist and editor of *Atlantic Monthly.* Wrote several memorial odes after the Civil War; was also American minister in Spain (1877–80) and England (1880–85).

[23] From "Elegy written in a Country Churchyard" by English poet Thomas Gray (1716–71).

Invention

Hitherto it is questionable if all the mechanical inventions yet made have lightened the day's toil of any human being.

J. S. Mill[24], 199

Alms

"There is no one on earth more disgusting and repulsive than he who gives alms. Even as there is no one so miserable as he who accepts them."

Maxim Gorky[25] p. 204

Liberty

Those corpses of youngmen,
Those martyrs that hang from the gibbets—
Those hearts pierced by the grey lead,
Cold and motionless as they seem, live elsewhere
With unslaughtered vitality.
They live in other youngmen, O kings!
They live in other brothers again ready to defy you!
They were purified by death —
they were taught and exalted!

Not a grave for the murder'd for freedom,
but grows seed for freedom, in its turn to bear seed.
Which the winds carry afar and re-sow, and the
rains and the snows nourish.
Not a disembodied spirit can the weapons of
tyrant let loose
But it stalks invincibly over the earth, whispering,
counselling, cautioning.

p. 268 Walt Whitman[26]

24 J.S. Mill (1808–73), essayist and philosopher, founder of the Utilitarian Society and author of several books on philosophy, political economy and reform.

25 Maxim Gorky (1888–1936), Russian writer; author of several books, including *Mother*; pen-name of Alexey Maximovich Penshkov.

26 Walt Whitman (1819–92) had a humble start with little education and worked his way through to win recognition late in life. Now acknowledged as a great and popular poet. From his masterpiece, *Leaves of Grass*.

Free Thought

"If there is anything that cannot bear free thought, let it crack."

Windell Phillips[27] 271

State

"Away with the State! I'will take part in that revolution. Undermine the whole conception of a state, declare free choice and spiritual kinship to be the only all important conditions of any union, and you will have the commencement of a liberty that is worth something."

Henrick Ibsen[28] 273

Oppression

"Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad."

p. 278[29]

PAGE 22

Martyrs

The man who flings his whole life into an attempt, at the cost of his own life, to protest against the wrongs of his fellow-men, is a saint compared to the active and passive up-holders of cruelty and injustice, even if his protest destroys other lives besides his own. Let him who is without sin in society cast the first stone at such an one.

p. 287[30]

Lower Class

While there is a lower class, I am in it.
While there is a criminal element, I am of it.
While there is a soul in jail, I am not free.

Engene B. Debs 144[31]

27 Wendell Phillips (1811–1884), American orator and reformer; also active in the anti-slavery movement.

28 Henrik Johan Ibsen (1828–1906), Norwegian playwright acknowledged as a founder of modern prose drama.

29 *Ecclesiastes, Chapter 7, Verse 7.*

30 From an essay by Emma Goldmann (1869–1940), Lithuania-born American anarchist.

31 Eugene Victor Debs (1855–1926), American socialist leader. On June 16, 1918, Debs made an anti-war speech in Canton, Ohio, protesting World War I, and was arrested under the Espionage Act of 1917. He was convicted, sentenced to serve ten years in prison and disenfranchised for life. Debs made this memorable statement at his sentencing hearing.

One against all **(Charles Fourier: 1772–1837)**[32]

The present social order is a ridiculous mechanism, in which portions of the whole are in conflict and acting against the whole. We see each class in society desire, from interest, the misfortune of the other classes, placing in every way individual interest in opposition to public good. The lawyer wishes litigation and suits, particularly among the rich; the physician desires sickness. (The latter would be ruined if everybody died without disease, as would the former if all quarrels were settled by arbitration.) The soldier wants a war, which will carry off half of his comrades and secure him promotion; the undertaker wants burials; monopolist and forestallers want famine, to double or treble the price of grain; the architect, the carpenter, the mason want conflagration, that will burn down a hundred houses to give activity to their branches of business.

p. 202

PAGE 23

New Gospel

"Society can overlook murder, adultry or swindling; it never forgives the preaching of a new gospel."

p. 327 Frederic Harrison[33]

Tree of Liberty

The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is its natural manure.

Thomas Jefferson 332[34]

Chicago Martyrs

Say, then, that the man erred grievously, if his error had been ten times as great, it ought to have been wiped from human recollection by his sacrifice . . .

Granted freely that their idea of the best manner of making a protest was utterly wrong and impossible, granted that they went not the best way to work. But what was it that drove them into attack against the social order as

[32] Francois Marie Charles Fourier (1772–1837), French socialist writer. Quote probably from *The Cry for Justice.*

[33] Frederic Harrison (1831–1923), Professor of jurisprudence and international law to the Inns of Court (1877–89). Author of many books on historical, political and literary subjects.

[34] Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826), a great liberal and the third President of the United States of America. From a letter to W.S. Smith, November 13, 1787.

they found it? They and thousands of other men that stood with them were not bad men, nor depraved, nor blood thirsty, nor hard hearted, nor criminal, nor selfish, nor crazy. Then what was it that evoked a complaint so bitter and deep seated . . .

No one ever contemplated the simple fact that men do not band themselves tegether to make a protest without the belief that they have something to protest about, and that, in any organised state of society, a widespread protest is something for grave inquiry.

Charles Edward Russell 333[35]

PAGE 24

Will of Revolutionary

"I also wish my friends to speak little or not at all about me, because idols are created when men are praised, and this is very bad for the future of the human race. . . Acts alone, no matter by whom committed, ought to be studied, praised or blamed. Let them be praised in order that they may be initiated when they see to contribute to the common weal; let them be censured when they are regarded as injurious to the general well-being, so that they may not be repeated.

"I desire that on no occasion, whether near or remote, nor for any reason whatsoever, shall demonstrations of a political or religious character be made before my remains, as I consider the time devoted to the dead would be better employed in improving the conditions of the living, most of whom stand in great need of this."

Will of Franscisco Ferrer[36]
Spanish educator 1859–1909
Executed after the Barcelona riots by a plot of his clerical enemies.

Charity

"Come follow me", said Jesus to the rich young man. . . To stay in his own set and invest his fortune in work of charity, would have been comparatively easy Philanthropy has been fashionable in every age. Charity takes the insurretionary edge off of poverty. Therefore, the philanthropic rich man is a benefactor to his fellow magnates, and is made to feel their gratitude, to him all doors of fashion swing. He denied the legitimacy of alms-giving as a

35 From Upton Sinclair, *The Cry for Justice.*

36 Francesc Ferrer i Guardia (1859–1909), Catalan free thinker, anarchist and educationist. He was arrested, charged and executed without any proof in a trial which was widely condemned as judicial murder.

plaster for the deep-lying sore in social tissue. . .. Philanthropy as a substitute or justice—he would have none of it. . .

PAGE 25

Charity is twice cursed—it hardens him that gives and softens him that takes. It does more harm to the poor than exploitation, because it makes them willing to be exploited. It breeds slavishness which is moral suicide. The only thing Jesus would permit a swollen fortune to do was to give itself to revolutionary propaganda, in order that swollen fortunes might be forever after impossible . . .

Bouck White, Clergyman, born 1874. U.S.A. p. 353[37]

Fight for Freedom

The power of armies is a visible thing
Formal, and circumscribed in time and space;
But who the limits of that power shall trace
Which a brave people into light can bring
Or hide, at will, —for freedom combating.
By just revenge inflamed? No foot may chase,
No eye can follow, to a fatal place
That power that spirit whether on the wing
Like the strong wind, or sleeping like the wind
Within its awful caves—from year to year
Spring this indigenous produce far and near;
No craft this subtle element can bind,
Rising like water from the soil, to find
In every nook a lip that it may cheer.

W. Wordsworth[38]

PAGE 26

The Charge of the Light Brigade

Half a league half a league,
    Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
    Rode the six hundred.

37 Bouck White (1874–1951), American socialist and author. Quoted by Upton Sinclair, *The Cry of Justice.*

38 William Wordsworth (1750–1850), popular English poet among the early Romantics and also a poet of nature; radical and pro-republican in his youth.

'Forward the Light Brigade!
Charge for the guns!' He said;
Into the valley of Death,
    Rode the six hundred.

'Forward the Light Brigade!'
Was there a man dismayed?
Not, though the soldiers knew
    Some one had blundered;

Their's not to make reply,
Their's not to reason why.
Their's but to do and die;
Into the valley of Death
    Rode the six hundred.

Cannon to the right of them,
Cannon to the left of them,
Cannon in front of them,
    Volleyed and thundered;

Stormed at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell,
    Rode the six hundred.

Flashed all their sabres bare,
Flashed as they turned in air
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
    All the world wondered:

PAGE 27

Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right through the line they broke,
Cossacks and Russians
Reeled from the sabre stroke
    Shattered and sundered.

Cannon to the right of them.
Cannon to the left of them,
Cannon behind them
    Volleyed and thundered;

Stormed at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell
They that had fought so well
Came through the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
    Left of six hundred.

When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!
    All the world wondered.

Honour, the charge made!
Honour, the Light Brigade!
    Noble six hundred.

Lord Tennyson[39]

Dilde tu is mizaaj kaa Parvardigaar de
Jo gham ki gharhi ko bhi khushi se guzaar de[40]

Sajaa kar mayyiat-e-umeed naakaami ke phoolon se
Kisi hamdard ne rakh di mere toote hue dil mein[41]

Chherh naa ai farishte tu zikre ghame-Jaanaanaan
Kyon yaad dilaate ho bhulaa huaa afsaanaa[42]

[39] Lord Alfred Tennyson (1809–1892), English poet. Several generations of Indian students grew up reading Tennyson, and this poem in particular.

[40] Give me a (stout) heart of such temperament, O Protector
That it may pass the hour of sorrow also as a happy hour

[41] The bier of (my) hope, bedecked with the flowers of failure—
Some fellow-sufferer (friend) has placed it in my broken heart!

[42] Do not start O' Angel with the sad tale of the dear beloved
Why must you remind (me) of that forgotten episode (tale)?

Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right through the line they broke,
Cossack and Russian
Reeled from the sabre stroke
Shattered and sundered.
Cannon to the right of them,
Cannon to the left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volleyed and thundered;
Stormed at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell.
They that had fought so well
Came through the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of Six Hundred.
When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!
All the world wondered.
Honour the charge made!
Honour the Light Brigade!
Noble Six Hundred.

Lord Tennyson!

دل دے تو اسی مزاج کا پروردگار دے
جو غم کی گھڑی کو بھی خوشی سے گزار دے +

پھر نہ اگر شتے تو ذکرِ غمِ جاناں
کیوں یاد دلاتے ہو بھولا ہوا افسانہ +

سجا کر میت امید ناکامی کے ہوا سے
کسی بیمار نے رکھ دی میرے ٹوٹے ہوئے دل میں +

PAGE 28

Birth-right

We're the sons of sires that baffled
Crowned and mirtes (?) tyranny;
They defied the field and scaffold
For their birth-rights—so will we!

T. Campbell[43]

Glory of the Cause

Ah! not for idle hatred, not
For honour, fame, nor self applause
But for the glory of the cause,
You did, what will not be forgot.

Arthur Clogh[44]

Immortality of Soul

For you know if you can once get a man believing in immortality, there is nothing more left for you to desire; you can take everything in the world he owns—you can skin him alive if you please—and he will bear it with perfect good humour.

Upton Sinclair 403 C.J.[45]

God's Tyrants?

A tyrant must put on the appearance of uncommon devotion to religion. Subjects are less apprehensive of illegal treatment from a ruler whom they consider god-fearing and pious. On the other hand, they do less easily move against him, believing that he has the gods on his side.[46]

43 Thomas Campbell (1777–1844), Scottish poet. Earlier editions of the Notebook misread the 'T' as 'J' and identified this as Joseph Campbell (1879–1944) whose lyrics and ballads were based on Irish legends and folklore.

44 Arthur Hugh Clough (1819–61) English poet. A pupil of Thomas Arnold at Rugby, a Fellow of Oriel. Principal of University Hall, London and an examiner in Education Office.

45 *Cry for Justice.*

46 From Aristotle.

PAGE 29

Soldiers and Thought

'If my soldiers were to begin to reflect, not one of them would remain in the ranks."

Frederick the Great[47] 562

The Noblest Fallen

The noblest have fallen. They were buried
obscurely in a deserted place.
No tears fell over them.
Strange hands carried them to the grave.
No cross, no enclosure, and no tomb stone tell
their glorious names.
Grass grows over them, a feeble blade
bending low keeps the secret.
The sole witness were the surging waves,
which furiously beat against the shore,
But even they the mighty waves could
not carry farewell greetings to the distant home.

V. N. Figner[48]

Prison

There were no stars, no earth, no time,
No check, no change, no good, no crime,
But silence, and a stirless breath,
Which neither was of Life nor death.

The Prisoner of Chillon[49]

PAGE 30

After Conviction

During the moments which immediately follow upon his sentence, the mind

47 Frederick of Prussia (1712–86), administrator, military genius and a man of culture, who gave nationhood to Prussia.

48 Vera Nikolaevna Figner (1852–1942) Russian revolutionist and martyr. "One of the first women to declare war on Tsarism" (E. Yaroslavsky in her obituary note). Her memoirs were published in 7 volumes.

49 This poem by Lord Byron published in 1816 describes the imprisonment of a patriot Francois de Bonnivard (1496–1570) in the castle of Chillon on the Lake of Geneva. Lines 245—258/IV of the long Poem.

of the condemned in many respects resembles that of a man on the point of death. Quiet, and as if inspired, he no longer clings to what he is about to leave, but firmly looks in front of him, fully conscious of the fact that what is coming is inevitable.

V.N. Figner

The Prisoner

It is suffocating under the low, dirty roof;
My strength grows weaker year by year;
They oppress me; this stony floor,
This iron chained table,
This bed-stead, this chair, chained
To the walls, like boards of the grave,
In this eternal, dumb, deep silence
One can only consider oneself a corpse.

N.A. Morozov[50]

Naked walls, prison thoughts,
How dark and sad you are,
How heavy to be a prisoner inactive,
And dream of years of freedom.

Morozov

Tujhe zabaah karne ki khushi, mujhe marne kaa shauq,
Meri bhi marzi wohi hai, jo mere sayyaad ki hai[51]

PAGE 31

Everything here is so silent, lifeless, pale,
The years pass fruitless, leaving no trace;
The weeks and days drag on heavily,
Bringing only dull boredom in their suite.

Morozov

50 Nikolai Alexandrovich Morozov (1854–1946), professional revolutionary, writer, poet and scientist. Met Karl Marx in London in 1880 and was handed the *Communist Manifesto* for translation into Russian. Studied and wrote about sciences (28 volumes on Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics and Astronomy) while in prison for nearly 25 years—(1875–78 and 1881 to 1905). Also wrote poetry and fiction.

51 You delight in slaughter, I have a craving for death
I have the same wish as has my executioner!

Our thoughts grow dull from long confinement;
There is a feeling of heaviness in our bones;
The minutes seem eternal from torturing pain,
In this cell, four steps wide.

Entirely for our fellowmen we must live,
Our entire selves for them we must give,
And for their sakes struggle against ill fate!

Morozov

Came to Set me Free

At last men came to set me free;
I ask'd not why and reck'd not where,
It was at length the same to me,
Fetter'd or fetterless to be;
I learn'd to love despair.
And thus when they appeared at last,
And all my bonds aside were cast,
These heavy walls to me had grown
A hermitage—and all my own.

The Prisoner of Chillon[52]

PAGE 32

And from on high we have been honoured with a mission!
We passed a severe school, but acquired higher knowledge.
Thanks to exile, prison, and a bitter lot,
We know and value the world of truth and freedom!

Prisoner of Schlusselburg[53]

Death and Suffering of a Child

'A child was born. He committed consciously neither bad nor good actions.

52 XIV, Lines 370–378.

53 Schlusselburg, a town on marshy ground in Leningrad area, where river Neva issues from Lake Ladogo. On an island opposite is a fortress built by the army of Peter the Great in 1702, after its capture. Schlusselburg was the "key" to the sea, according to Peter the Great. The fortress was later converted into a prison whose inmates included Marshal Dolgoruki, Tsar Ivan VI, many Decembrists (revolutionaries), the anarchist Bakunin, Polish patriot Lukasovislag, and Lenin's brother, who was hanged there.

He fell ill, suffered much and long, until he died in terrible agony. Why? Wherefore? It is the eternal riddle for the philosopher.'

Frame of Mind of a Revolutionary

"He who has ever been under the influence of the life of Jesus, who has borne, in the name of an ideal, humiliation, suffering and death; he who has once considered Him as an ideal and his life as the prototype of a disinterested love,—will understand the frame of mind of the revolutionary who has been sentenced and thrown into a living tomb for his work on behalf of popular freedom."

Vera N. Figner

Rights

Don't ask for rights. Take them. And don't let any one give them to you. A right that is handed to you for nothing has something the matter with it. It's more than likely, it is only a wrong turned inside out.[54]

PAGE 33

No Enemies?

You have no enemies, you say?
Alas! my friend, the boast is poor;
He who has mingled in the fray
Of Duty, that the brave endure,
Must have made foes! If you have none,
Small is the work that you have done.
You've hit no traitor on the hip,
You've dashed no cup from perjured lip,
You've never turned wrong to right,
You've been a coward in the fight.

Charles Mackay 747[55]

Child Labour

No fledgling feeds the father bird,
No chicken feeds the hen;
No kitten mouses for the cat —

54 Source not given. Torn sheet.
55 Charles Mackay (1814–1889), British poet and journalist. Edited *Cavalier Songs and Ballads of England from 1642 to 1684.*

This glory is for men
We are the wisest, strongest Race—
Loud may our praise be sung!
The only animal alive
That lives upon its young!

Charlotte Perkins Gilman[56]

PAGE 34

No Classes! No Compromise!!

(George D. Herron)

Under the Socialist movement there is coming a time, and the time may be even now at hand, when improved conditions or adjusted wages will no longer be thought to be an answer to the cry of labour; yes when these will be but an insult to the common intelligence. It is not for better wages, improved capitalist conditions or a share of capitalist profits that the Socialist movement is in the world; it is here for the abolition of wages and profits, and for the end of capitalism and the private capitalist. Reformed political institutions, boards of arbitration between capital and labour, philanthropies and privileges that are but the capitalists' gifts—none of these can much longer answer the question that is making the temples, thrones and Parliaments of the nation tremble. There can be no peace between the man who is down and the man who builds on his back. There can be no reconciliation between classes; there can only be an end of classes. It is idle to talk of goodwill until there is first justice, and idle to talk of justice until the man who makes the world possesses the work of his own hands. The cry of the world's workers can be answered with nothing save the whole product of their work.

George D. Herron[57]

PAGE 35

Wastes of Capitalism

Economic estimate about Australia by Theodore Hertzka (1886)[58]
Every family = 5-roomed 40 ft. sq. House to last for 50 years.
Workers' workable age: 16-50.
So we have 5,000,000.

[56] Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860–1935), American novelist, writer, lecturer and social reformer. Source illegible; bottom part of page is torn

[57] In all likelihood, this is George D. Herron (1862–1925), who was at one time a Christian Socialist minister, a founder of the Rand School of Social Science, and member of the Socialist Party (USA).

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಗಾಂಧಿ ... ನಿಧಿ (ರಿ)
ಪರಿಗ್ರಹ ... 10864
ACC. ...
ಗಾಂಧೀ ಗ್ರಂಥಾಲಯ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು-1

Labour of 615,000 workers is sufficient to produce food for 22,000,000 people = 12.3% of labour.
Including labour cost of transport, lunuries need only 315,000 = 6.33% workers' labour.
That amounts to this-that 20% of the available labour is enough for supporting the whole of the continent. The rest 80% is exploited and wasted due to capitalist order of society.

PAGE 36

Czarist Regime and the Bolshievist Regime

Frazier Hunt tells that in the first fourteen months of their rule, the Bolsheviks executed 4,500 men, mostly for stealing and speculation.

After the 1905 Revolution, Stolypin,[59] minister of Czar, caused the execution of 32,773 men within twelve months.

p. 390 Brass Check[60]

PAGE 37

Permanency of the Social Institutions

It is one of the illusions of each generation that the social institutions in which it lives are, in some peculiar sense, "natural", unchangeable and permanent. Yet for countless thousands of years, social institutions have been successively arising, developing, decaying and becoming gradually superseded by others better adapted to contemporary needs. . . The question, then, is not whether our present civilisation will be transformed, but how it will be transformed?

It may, by considerate adaptation, be made to pass gradually and peacefully into a new form. Or, if there is angry resistance instead of adaptation, it may crash, leaving mankind painfully to build up a new civilisation from the lower level of a stage of social chaos and disorder, in which not only the abuses but also the material, intellectual and moral gains of the previous order will have been lost.

P.I. Decay of Cap. Civilisation[61]

58 Theodor Hertzka (1845–1924), Hungarian-Austrian economist and journalist, author of *Freeland: A Social Anticipation*.
59 Pyotr Arkodyevich Stolypin (1862–1911) was Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Minister for the Interior from 1906 to 1911 under the Czar.
60 Source uncertain.
61 Source uncertain.

PAGE 38

Capitalism and Commercialism

Rabindra Nath's address to an assembly of Japanese students:[62]

> You had your own industry in Japan; how scrupulously honest and true it was, you can see by its products - by their grace and strength, their conscientiousness in details where they can hardly be observed. But the tidal wave of falsehood has swept over your land from that part of the world where business is business and honesty is followed merely as the best policy. Have you never felt shame when you see the trade advertisements, not only plastering the whole town with lies and exaggerations, but invading the green fields, where the peasants do their honest labour, and to hilltops which greet the first pure light of the morning? . . . This commercialism with its barbarity of ugly decorations is a terrible menace to all humanity, because it is setting up the ideal of power over the perfection. It is making the cult of self-seeking exult in its naked shamelessness. Its movements are violent, its noise is discordantly loud. It is carrying its own damnation because it is trampling into distortion . . . the humanity upon which it stands. It is strenuously turning out money at the cost of happiness . . . The vital ambition of the present civilisation of Europe is to have the exclusive possession of the devil.

Capitalist Society

"The foremost truth of political economy is that everyone desires to obtain individual wealth with as little sacrifice as possible."

Nassau Senior[63]

PAGE 40

Karl Marx on Religion

Man makes religion; religion does not make man. Religion, indeed, is the self-consciousness and the self-feeling of man who either has not yet found himself, or else (have found himself) has lost himself once more. But man is not an abstract being squatting down somewhere outside the world. Man is the world of men, the state, society. This State, this society, produces religion, produces a perverted world consciousness, because they are a perverted world.

62 Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941) poet, philosopher and educationist; founded Shantiniketan (1901) as a forerunner of Vishwa-Bharati. Awarded Nobel Prize for Literature (1913). Visited Japan and the United States in 1916–17.

63 Nassau William Senior (1790–1864), English economist.

Religion is the generalised theory of this world, its encyclopaedic compend, its logic in a popular form . . . The fight against religion is, therefore, a direct campaign against the world whose spiritual aroma is religion.

PAGE 41

(Continued from last page)
Religion is the sight of oppressed creature, the feelings of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of unspiritual conditions. *It is the opium of the people.*"

The people can not be really happy until it has been deprived of illusory happiness by the abolition of religion. The demand that the people should shake itself free of illusion as to its own condition is the demand that it should abandon a *condition which needs* illusion.

The weapon of criticism cannot replace the criticism of weapons. Physical force must be overthrown by physical force; but theory, too, becomes a physical force as soon as it takes possession of the masses.

PAGE 42

A Revolution not Utopian

A radical revolution, the general emancipation of mankind, is not a utopion dream for Germany; what is Utopian is the idea of a partial, an exclusively political, revolution, which would leave the pillars of the house standing.

"Great are great because
We are on knees
Let us Rise!"[64]

PAGE 43

Herbert Spencer[65] on State

"Whether it be true or not that man was born in equity and conceived in sin, it is certainly true that Government was born of aggression and by aggression."

64 At several places in the Notebook such as this, Bhagat Singh writes quotations or captions in the margins or diagonally across the page. All such instances are not noted here. In many cases it has not been possible to ascertain the source of the quote.

65 Herbert Spencer (1820–1903), English philosopher who applied evolutionary theory to philosophy. Works include *The Principles of Psychology* (1855) and *First Principles* (1862).

Man and Mankind

"I am a man,
and all that affects mankind concerns me."

Roman Dramatist[66]

England's Condition Reviewed

"Good people, things will never go well in England, so long as goods be not in common, and so long as there be villains and gentlemen. By what right are they, whom we call lords, greater folk then we? On what grounds have they deserved it? Why do they hold us in serfage? If we all come of the same father and mother, Adam and Eve, how can they say or prove that they are greater or are better than we? If it be not that they make us gain for them by our toil what they spend in their pride. They are clothed in velvet and are warm in their furs and ermines, while we are covered with rags. They have wine and spices and their bread; and we oatcake, and straw, and water to drink! They have leisure and fine houses; we have pain and labour, rain and wind in the fields, and yet it is *of our toil that these man hold their state.*" . . .

Friar of Wat Taylor's Rebel[67]

PAGE 44

Revolution and Classes

All classes striving for power are revolutionary, and talk of Equality. All classes, when they get into power, are conservative and are convinced that equality is an iridescent dream. All classes but one—the working class, for as Comte has said, "The working class is not properly speaking, a class at all, but constitutes the body of society. "But the day of the working class, the fusion of all useful people, has not even yet arrived."

"World History for Workers" p. 47 by Alfred Barton[68]

PAGE 45

Sir Henry Maine has said: [69]

"That most of the land of England has passed to its present owners by the

66 Other details not given.

67 A few words are not clear. Source torn out except the words: Friar of Wat Taylor's Rebel.

68 Other details not available.

69 Perhaps Sir Henry James Sumner Maine (1822–88) English historian and comparative jurist. Also legal member of Council in India from 1863 to 1869 and Vice-Chancellor, Calcutta University.

mistake of lawyers—mistakes that in lesser criminals were punished by hanging."

"The law convicts the man or woman
Who steals the goose from of the Common,
But lets the greater felon loose
Who steals the Common from the goose."

PAGE 46

Democracy

Democracy is theoretically a system of political and legal equality. But in concrete and practical operation it is false, for there can be no equality, not even in politics and before the law, so long as there is glaring inequality in economic power. So long as the ruling class owns the workers' jobs and the press and the schools of the country and all organs for the moulding and expression of public opinion; so long as it monopolise(s) all trained public functionaries and disposes of unlimited funds to influence elections, so long as the laws are made by the ruling class and the courts are presided over by members of the class; so long as lawyers are private practitioners who sell their skill to the highest bidder, and litigation is technical and costly, so long will the nominal equality before the law be a hollow mockery.

In a capitalist regime, the whole machinery of democracy operates to keep the ruling class minority in power through the sufferage of the working class majority, and when the bourgeois govt. feels itself endangered by democratic institutions, such institutions are often crushed without compunction.

p. 58, From Marx to Lenin
(by Morris Hillquit[70])

Democracy does not secure "equal rights and a share in all political rights for everybody, to whatever class or party he may belong". (Kautsky[71]) It only allows free political and legal play for the existing economic inequalities. . . . Democracy under capitalism is thus not general, abstract democracy but

70 Morris Hillquit (1869–1933), socialist lawyer from New York.
71 Karl Johann Kautsky (1854–1938), German politician who influenced the adoption of Marxist principles in Erfurt Programme (1891) for Social Democrats. Opposed Lenin and Bolsheviks in the Second International.

specific bourgeois democracy, . . . or as Lenin terms it—democracy for the bourgeois.[72]

PAGE 47

Term "Revolution" defined

"The conception of revolution is not to be treated in the police interpretation of the term, in the sense of an armed rising. A party would be mad that would choose the method of insurrection on principle so long as it has at its disposal different, less costly, and safer methods of action. In that sense, social democracy was never revolutionary on principle. It is so only in the sense that it recognises that when it attains political power, it can not employ it for any purpose other than the abolition of the mode of production upon which the present system rests."

Karl Kautsky[73]

Some facts and figures about United States

5 men can produce bread for 1000
1 man can produce cotton cloth for 250
1 man can produce woollens for 300
1 man can produce boots and shoes for 1000

Iron Heel (p. 78)[74]

15,000,000 are living [in] abject poverty who can not even maintain their working efficiency.

3,000,000 child labourers.

Re: England[75]

Pre-war estimates

Total Production of England (per annum)	£2000,000,000
Gains through foreign investments	£200,000,000
	£2200,000,000
l/9th part of the population took away ½	£1100,000,000
2/9th part of the population 1/3 of the Rest	£1100,000,000
i.e.	£300,000,000

72 Source and reference torn.

73 Bhagat Singh had first attributed this quote to Eduard Bernstein, but then crossed it out and written Kautsky's name. It is unclear where this quote is from.

74 Novel (published in 1908) by Jack (John) Griffith London (1876–1916), American novelist who, growing up in poverty, became a socialist essayist, journalist and author of several books.

75 Source of the data not indicated.

48

Internationale

Arise, ye prisoners of starvation!
Arise ye wretched on earth,
For justice thunders condemnation,
A better world's in birth
No more traditions chains shall bind us,
Arise, ye slaves! no more in thrall!
The earth shall rise on new foundations,
We have been naught, we be all.

[Refrain]

It is the final conflict;
Let each stand in his place,
The Internationale Party
Shall be the human race.

Behold them seated in their glory,
The kings of mine and rail and soil!
What would you read in all their story
But how they plundered toil!
Fruits of people's work are theirs
In the strong coffers of a few;
But voting for their restitution,
The men will ask only their due.

[Same Refrain]

Toilers from shops and fields united,
The party we of all who work;
The earth belongs to us, the people,
No room here for the shirk.
How many on our flesh have fattened?
But if the noisome birds of prey,
Shall vanish from our sky some morning
The blessed sunlight still will stay.

[Same refrain]

Internationale[76]

Arise, ye prisoners of starvation!
Arise ye wretched on earth,
To justice thunders condemnation,
A better world's in birth.
No more traditions chains shall bind us.
Arise, ye slaves! no more in thrall!
The earth shall rise on new foundations,
We have been naught, we be all.

[Refrain]
It is the final conflict,
Let each stand in his place,
The Internationale Party
Shall be the human race.

Behold them seated in their glory,
The kings of mine and rail and soil!
What would you read in all their story
But how they plundered toil?
Fruits of people's work are buried
In the strong coffers of a few;
In voting for their restitution,
The men will ask only their due.

[Same Refrain]

Toilers from shops and fields united,
The party we of all who work;
The earth belongs to us, the people,
No room here for the shirk,
How many on our flesh have fattened?
But if the noisome birds of prey,
Shall vanish from our sky some morning
The blessed sunlight still will stay.

[Same Refrain again]

76 A revolutionary song, first sung in France in 1871, and since then a popular song of workers and communists. Adopted as a 'national anthem' by several Communist countries.

PAGE 49

Marseillaise[77]

Ye sons of toil, awake to glory!
Hark, hark, what myriads bid you rise;
Your children, wives and grand sires hoary,
Behold their tears and hear their cries!
Shall hateful tyrants mischief breeding,
With hireling hosts, a ruffian band—
Affright and desolate the land
While peace and liberty lie bleeding?
[Chorus]

To arms, To arms! Ye brave!
The avenging sword unsheathe
March on, march on, all hearts resolved,
On Victory or death.

With luxury and pride unsounded,
The vile insatiate despots dare,
Their thirst for gold and power unbounded
To meet and vend the light and air;
Like beasts of burden would they load us,
Like gods would bid their slaves adore,
But man is man and who is more?
Then shall they longer last and goad us?
[The same Chorus again]

Oh liberty! Can man resign thee,
Once having felt thy generous flame?
Can dungeons bolts and bars confine thee,
Or whips thy noble spirit tame?
Too long the world has wept bewailing,
That falsehood, daggers tyrants wield;
But freedom is our sword and shield,
And all their arts are unavailing?
[Same Chorus again]

77 The French National Anthem, composed by Claude Joseph Rouget de Lisle, French Captain of Engineers, and a musical amateur, on April 24, 1792, in response to a call by the Mayor of Strasbourg for a patriotic song. It was adopted and sung with enthusiasm by troops on their march from Marseille to Paris.

PAGE 50

Growth of Opportunism

It was the possibility of acting within law that reared opportunism within the labour parties of the period of Second Internationale.

Lenin vide Collapse of II Int.N.

Illegal Work

"In a country where the bourgeosie, or the counter-revolutionary Social Democracy is in power, the Communist Party must learn to coordinate its legal work with illegal work, and the legal work must always be under the effective control of the illegal party."

Bukharin[78]

Betrayal of II Int.N.'s Cause

The vast organisation of socialism and labour were adjusted to such peace time activities, and when the crisis came, a number of the leaders and large portion of the masses were unable to adopt themselves to the new situation. . . . It is this inevitable development that accounts largely for the betrayal of II International.

Marx to Lenin, p. 140 (Morris Hillquit)

"The Cynic's Word Book"[79] (1906)

Ambrose Pierce writes:

"Grape shot – (n.) – An argument which the future is preparing in answer to the demands of American Socialism."

PAGE 51

Slavery

Religion a supporter of the established order:

In 1835, the General Assembly of the Presbytrain Church resolved that: "Slavery is recognised in both Old and New Testaments, and is not condemned by the authority of God".

78 Nikolai Aleksandrovich Bukharin (1888–1938), Soviet leader, a leading Marxist theorist after Lenin. Executed during the Stalinist purges of the Communist Party.

79 Also known as *The Devil's Dictionary*, this satirical book by Ambrose Bierce has inspired dozens of imitations. Bierce (1842–1914) was an American journalist, short-story writer and satirist.

The Charleston Baptist Association issued the following in 1835:

"The right of masters to dispose of the time of their slaves has been distinctly recognised by the Creator of all things, who is surely at liberty to vest the right of property over any object whomsoever. He pleases."

The Revd. ED, Simon, Doctor of Divinity, a professor in Methodist College of Virginia wrote:

"Extracts from Holy Writ unequivocally assert the right of property in slaves, together with the usual incidents to that right. The right to buy and sell is clearly stated. Upon the whole, then, whether we consult the Jewish policy instituted by God Himself, or the uniform opinion and practice of mankind in all ages, or the injunctions of the New Testament and the moral law, we are brought to the conclusion that slavery is not immoral. Having established the point that the first African slaves were legally bought into bondage, the right to detain their children in bondage follows as an indispensable consequence. Thus we see that the slavery that exists in America was founded in right."

Capitalism Supported

Henry Van Dyke writes in "Essay in Application" (1905):

"The Bible teaches that God owns the world. He distributes to every man according to His own Good pleasure, conformably to the general laws."

PAGE 52

Statistics about United States

Army was 50,000 strong
It is now 300,000 strong.

Plutocracy owns 67 billions of wealth.
Out of the total persons engaged in occupations, only 9/10% belong to Plutocracy
Yet they own 70% of the total wealth.

Out of persons engaged in occupations 29% belong to Middle Class
They own 25% of the total wealth = 24 billions

Remaining 70% of the men in occupations belong to the Proletariat and they only (have)
4% of the total wealth i.e. 4 billions.

According to Lucian Saniel,[80] in 1900:
Out of total people engaged in occupations
= 250,251 belonged to Plutocrats
Out of total people = 8,429,845 to Middle Class
Out of total people = 20,395,137 to Proletariat

(Iron Heel)[81]

Rifles

You say you will have majority in the Parliament and State offices, but

"How many rifles have you got? Do you know where you can get plenty of lead? When it comes to powder, the chemica1 mixtures are better than mechanical mixtures. You take my word."

Iron Heel p. 198

PAGE 53

Power. . .[82]

A socialist leader had addressed a meeting of the plutocrats and charged them of mismanaging the society and thereby thrown the whole responsibility on their shoulders, the responsibility for the woes and misery that confronts the suffering humanity. Afterwards a capitalist (Mr. Wickson) rose and addressed him as follows:

"This, then, is our answer. We have no words to waste on you. When you reach out your vaunted strong hands for our palaces and purpled ease, we will show you what strength is. In roar of shell and shrapnel and in whine of machine guns will our answer be couched. We will grind you revolutionists down under our heel, and we shall walk upon your faces. The world is ours. We are its lords and ours it shall remain. As for the host of labour, it has always been in the dirt since history began, and I read history aright. And in the dirt it shall remain so long as I and mine, and those that come after us, have the power.

There is the word. It is the king of words—Power. Not God, not mammon but Power. Pour it over your tongue till it tingles with it. Power."

"I am answered." Earnest (the socialist leader) said quietly. "It is the only answer that could be given. Power. It is what we of the working class preach. We know, and well we know by bitter experience, that no appeal for the right,

80 Further details not known.
81 Novel by Jack London.
82 Rest of the heading partly torn, illegible.

for justice, for humanity can ever touch you. Your hearts are hard as your heels with which you tread upon the faces of the poor. So we have preached power. By the Power of our ballots, on election day, will we take your government away from you . . ."

"What if you do get a majority, a sweeping majority on election day," Mr. Wickson broke in to demand. "Suppose we refuse to turn the Government over to you after you have captured it at the ballot box?"

PAGE 54

"That also, have we considered," Earnest replied. "And we shall give you an answer in terms of lead. Power, you have proclaimed the king of words. Very good! Power, it shall be. And in the day that we sweep to victory at the ballot box, and you refuse to turn over to us the government we have constitutionally and peacefully captured, and you demand what we are going to do about it—in that day, I say, we shall answer you; and in roar of shell and shrapnel, in whine of machine guns shall our answer be couched.

"You can not escape us. It is true that you have read history aright. It is true that labour has, from the beginning of history, been in the dirt. And it is equally true that so long as you and yours and those that come after you, have power, that labour shall remain in the dirt. I agree with you. I agree with all that you have said. Power will be the arbiter, as it always has been the arbiter. It is a struggle of classes. Just as your class dragged down the old feudal nobility, so shall it be dragged down by my class, the working class. If you will read your biology and your sociology as clearly as do your history, you will see that this end I have described is inevitable. It does not matter whether it is in one year, ten or a thousand—your class shall be dragged down. And it shall be done by power. We of the labour host have conned that word over, till our minds are all atingle with it. Power. It is a kingly word."

Iron Heel (p. 88) by Jack London[83]

PAGE 55

Figures[84]

England:

1922—Number of unemployment (?) = 1,135,000

1926—it has oscillated to 1 ¼ and 1 ½ millions i.e. 1,250,000 to 1,500,000.

83 This long extract of an argument from Jack London's novel can perhaps give some indication of Bhagat Singh's mind and his philosophy of revolution.

84 Source not given.

Betrayal of the English Labour Leaders

The years 1911 to 1913 were times of unparalleled class struggles of the miners, railwaymen, and transport workers generally. In August 1911, a national, in other words a general, strike broke out on the railways. The vague shadow of revolution hovered over Britain in those days. The leaders exerted all their strength in order to paralyse the movement. Their motive was "Patriotism"; the affair was occuring at the time of the Agadir incident, which threatened to lead to a war with Germany. As is well known today, the Premier summoned the workers' leaders to a secret council, and called them to the salvation of the fatherland. And leaders did all that lay in their power, strengthening the bourgeoisie, and thus preparing the way for the imperialist slaughter.

p. 3
Where is Britain. . .?
Trotsky

PAGE 56

Betrayal

Only after 1920, did the movement return within bounds, after 'Black Friday', when the Triple alliance of miners', railwaymen's and transport leaders betrayed the general strike. (p. 3)

For Reform a Threat of Revolution is Necessary

. . .The British bourgeoisie reckoned that by such means (reform) a revolution could be avoided. It follows, therefore, that even for the introduction of reforms, the principles of gradualness alone is insufficient, and that an actual threat of revolution is necessary. (p. 29)

Social Solidarity:

. . . It would seem that once we stand for the annihilation of a privileged class which has no desire to pass from the scene, we have therein the basic content of the class struggle. But no, Macdonald[85] desires to "evoke" the consciousness of social solidarity. With whom? The solidarity of the working class is the expression of its internal welding in the struggle with the bourgeoisie.

The social solidarity which Macdonald preaches, is the solidarity of the exploited with the exploiters, in other words, the maintenance of exploitation.

[85] James Ramsay MacDonald (1866–1937) British statesman and Prime Minister (1924, 1929–35).

Revolution a Calamity

"The revolution in Russia", says Macdonald, "taught us a great lesson. It showed that revolution is a ruin and a calamity and nothing more."

PAGE 57

Revolution leads only to calamity! But the British democracy led to the imperialist war, . . . with the ruin of which the calamities of revolution cannot, of course, be compared in the very least. But in addition to this, what deaf ears and shameless face are necessary in order, in the face of a revolution which overthrew Tzarism, nobility and bourgeoisie, shook the church, awakened to a new life a nation of 130 millions, a whole family of nations, to declare that revolution is a calamity and nothing more."

p. 64

Peaceful?

When and where did the ruling class ever yield power and property on the order of a peaceful vote—and especially such a class as the British bourgeoisie, which has behind it centuries of world rapacity?

p. 66

Aim of Socialism—Peace

It is absolutely unchallenged that the aim of socialism is to eliminate force, first of all in its most crude and bloody forms, and afterwards in other more concealed forms.

p. 80 "Where is Britain Going?" Trotsky

Aim of the World Revolution:

1. To overthrow capitalism.
2. To control the nature for the service of humanity.

This is how Bukharin defined it.

PAGE 58

Man and Machinery

The United States Bureau of Labour tells:

12 lbs package of pins can be made by a man working with a machine in 1 hr. 34 minutes.

The same would take 140 hours and 55 minutes, if man works with tools only, but without machine.

(Ratio — 1.34: 140.55 minutes)

100 pairs of shoes by machine work take 234 hrs. 25 min.
By hand it will take 1,831 hrs. 40 minutes.
Labour cost on machine is $ 69.55
Labour cost by hand is $ 457.92

500 yards of gingham checks are made by machine labour in 73 hours.
By hand labour, it takes 5,844 hours.

100 lbs. of sewing cotton can be made by machine labour in 39 hrs.
By hand it takes 2,895 hours.

Re: Agriculture

A good man with a scythe can reap 1 acre a day (12 hrs)
A machine does the same work in 20 minutes

Six men with flials can thresh 60 liters of wheat in half an hour.
One machine thresher can do 12 times as much.

"The increased effectiveness of man-labour, aided by the use of machinery . . . varies from 150% in the case of rye, to 2,244% in the case of barley. . ."

PAGE 59

The Wealth of U.S.A. and Its Population

1850–1912

		Per capita		T. Population
In 1850 total wealth was	$ 7,135,780,000	$ 308	=	23,191,876
1860	$16,159,616,000	$514	=	31,443,321
1870	$30,068,518,000	$780	=	38,558,371
1880	$43,642,000,000	$870	=	50,155,783
1890	$65,037,091,000	$1,036	=	62,947,714
1900	$88,517,307,000	$1,165	=	75,994,575
1904	$107,104,202,000	$1,318	=	82,466,551
1912	$187,139,071,000	$1,965	=	95,400,503

Due to the use of machinery.

The machine is social in nature, as the tool was individual.

"Give us worse cotton, but give us better men" says Emerson."

"Deliver me those rickety perishing souls of infants, and let the cotton trade take its chance."

p. 81[86]

The man cannot be sacrificed to the machine. The machine must serve mankind, yet the danger to the human race lurks, menacing, in the Industrial Regime.

Poverty & Riches p. 81
Scott Nearing[87]

PAGE 60

Man and Machinery

C. Nanford Henderson,[88] in his "Payday" writes:

"This institution of industry, the most primitive of all institutions, organised and developed in order to free mankind from the tyranny of things, has become itself the greater tyranny, degrading a multitude into the conditions of slaves—slaves doomed to produce, through long and weary hours, a senseless glut of things and then forced to suffer for the lack of the very things they have produced."

Pov. Riches p. 87

Man is not for Machinery

The combination of steel and fire, which man has produced and called a machine, must be ever the servant, never the master of man. Neither the machine nor the machine owner may rule the human race.

p. 88

Imperialism

Imperialism is capitalism in that stage of development in which monopolies and financial capital have attained a preponderating influence, the export of

86 This is from Thomas Carlyle's (1795–1881), *Past and Present*, Book 4, 'The One Institution' (1843). The previous editions of Bhagat Singh's Notebooks have identified this, incorrectly, as a quotation from Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–82).

87 Scott Nearing (1883–1983), American economist, conservationist, peace activist, and writer. *Poverty and Riches* was published in 1916.

88 Identity not clear.

capital has acquired great importance, the international trusts have begun the partition of the world, and the biggest capitalist countries have completed the division of the entire terrestrial globe among themselves.

Lenin

PAGE 61

Dictatorship

Dictatorship is an authority relying directly upon force, and not bound by any laws.

The revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat is an authority maintained by the proletariat by means of force over and against the bourgeoisie, and not bound by any laws.

Prol. Revo,[89] p. 18 Lenin

Revolutionary Dictatorship

Revolution is an act in which one section of the population imposes its will upon the other by rifles, bayonets, guns, and other such exceedingly authoritarian means. And the party which has won is necessarily compelled to maintain its rule by means of that fear which its arms inspire in the reactionaries. If the Commune of Paris had not relied upon the armed people as against the bourgeoisie, would it have maintained itself more than twenty-four hours? Are we not, on the contrary, justified in reproaching the Commune for having employed this authority too little?"

F. Engels[90]

Bourgeois Democracy

Bourgeois democracy, while constituting a great historical advance in comparison with feudalism, nevertheless remains, and can not but remain, a very limited, a very hypocritical, institution, a paradise for the rich and a trap and a delusion for the exploited and for the poor.

Lenin p. 28

89 *The Proletarian Revolution and the Renegade Kautsky* (1918), by Lenin.

90 Friedrich Engels on the Paris Commune, quoted by Lenin in *The Proletarian Revolution*. The subsequent quotations, till Engels' letter to Babel, are all from this work.

PAGE 62

Exploitation of Labour and State

"Not only the ancient and feudal, but also the representative state of today is an instrument of exploitation of wage-labour by capital."

Engels

Dictatorship

"Since the state is only a temporary institution which is to be made use of in revolution, in order forcibly to suppress the opponents, it is perfectly absurd to talk of about a free popular state; so long as the proletariat still needs the state, it needs it not in the interest of freedom, but in order to suppress its opponents, and when it becomes possible to speak of freedom, the state, as such, ceases to exist."

Engels in his letter to Babel March 28th 1875

The Impatient Idealists

The impatient idealist—and without some impatience, a man will hardly prove effective—is almost sure to be led into hatred by the oppositions and disappointments which he encounters in his endeavour to bring happiness to the world.

Bertrand Russell[91]

PAGE 63

Leader

"No time need have gone to ruin" writes Carlyle, "could it have found a man great enough, a man wise and good enough; wisdom to discern truly what the time wanted, valour to lead it on the right road thither; these are the salvation of any time."

Arbitrariness

Kautsky[92] had written a booklet with the title "Proletariat Dictatorship" and had deplored the act of Bolsheviks in depriving the bourgeoisie people from the right of vote. Lenin writes in his "Proletarian Revolution": (pp. 77)

'Arbitrariness! Only think what a depth of meanest subserviency to the bourgeoisie, and of the most idiotic pendantry, is contained in such a reproach. When thoroughly bourgeois and, for the most part, even reactionary jurists of

91 Bertrand Russell (1872–1970), British philosopher and peace activist, author of numerous books.

capitalist countries, have in the course of, we may almost say, centuries, been drawing up rules and regulations and writing up hundreds of volumes of various codes and laws, and of interpretations of them to oppress the workers, to bind hand and foot the poor men, and to place a hundred and one hinderances and obstacles in the way of the simple and toiling mass of the people—when this is done, the bourgeois Liberals and Mr. Kautsky can see no "arbitrariness"! It is all Law and Order! It has all been thought out and written down, how the poor man is to be kept down and squeezed. There are thousands and thousands of bourgeois lawyers and officials able to interpret the laws that the worker and average peasant can never break through their barbed wire entanglements. This, of course, is not any arbitrariness. This, of course, is not a dictatorship of the filthy or profit-seeking exploiters who are drinking the blood of the people. Oh, it is nothing of the kind! It is 'pure democracy', which is becoming purer and purer

PAGE 64

everyday. But when the toiling and exploited masses, for the first time in history, separated by Imperialist War from their brothers across the frontier, have constructed their Soviets, have summoned to the workers of political construction, the classes which the bourgeois used to oppress and to stupefy, and begun themselves to build up a new proletarian State, begun, in the midst of raging battles, in the fire of Civil War, to lay down the fundamental principles of 'a State without exploiters', then all the scoundrels of the bourgeoisie, the entire band of blood suckers, with Kautsky, singing 'obliger to', scream about arbitrariness!'

(Lenin) p. 77–78

Party

But it has become clear that no revolution is possible unless there is a party able to lead the revolution. (p. 15, Lessons of October, 1917).[93]

A party is the instrument indispensable to a proletarian revolution.

(p. 17, ibid by Trotsky).

92 Karl Kautsky (1854–1938), leading social democratic theoretician. Author of numerous works, among which *The Dictatorship of the Proletariat* (1918) is the most pertinent in the context of Bhagat Singh's readings of Lenin.

93 *The Lessons of October* was written in 1924 as a preface to Trotsky's—whose name Bhagat Singh sometimes spells 'Trotzky'—writings of 1917. Except for some intervening quotes from *The Communist Manifesto*, all the subsequent quotes, till Bhagat Singh's notes on sociology, are from this work.

PAGE 65[94]

Law, morality, religion are to him (the working man) so many bourgeois prejudices, behind which lurk in ambush just as many bourgeois interests.

Karl Marx, Manifesto[95]

PAGE 67[96]

PAGE 69

Aim of Communists

"The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aim. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Workingmen of all countries, unite!"

Aim of Communist Revolution

"We have seen above, that the first step in the revolution by the working class, is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class, to win the battle of democracy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the State, i.e. of the proletariat organised as the ruling class, and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible."

"Communist Manifesto"

PAGE 70

To point out the *mistakes of Karl Marx*

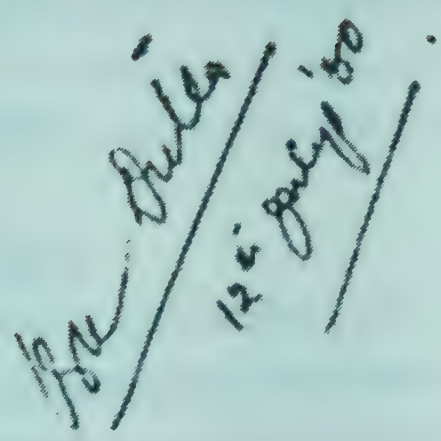
. . . And it certainly looks as if Trotsky belonged to what Germans called the school of "real politics" and was as innocent as Bismarck of any ideology at

94 The upper half of this page is blank, except the (slanting) signature of B.K. Dutta with the date 12.7.30 written twice. The quotation from Karl Marx is given below the signature.

95 From *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, 1848. The subsequent quotations are also from this work.

96 Pages 66 and 68 are missing. Page no. 67 has B.K. Dutta's signature, with the following text below it:

> Autograph of Mr. B.K. Dutta taken on 12th July '30, in Cell No. 137 Central Jail Lahore four days, before his final departure from this Jail.
>
> Bhagat Singh



Autograph
of Mr. B K Dutta
taken on 12th July '30
in Cell No: 137
Central Jail Lahore.
four days before his final
departure from this jail
Bhagat Singh

all. And it is, therefore, rather curious to note that even Trotsky is not revolutionary enough to say that Marx had made a mistake; but feels obliged to devote a page or so to the task of exegesis—that is, proving that the sacred books meant something quite different from what they said.

Preface to the Lessons of October 1917 by Trotsky
Preface by A. Susan Lawrence

Voice of the People

The Governments we know have all ruled, in the main, by indifference of the people; they have always been Govts. of a minority, of this or that fraction of the country which is politically conscious. But when the giant wakes, he will have his way, and all that matters to the world is whether he will wake in time.

Preface

PAGE 71

"It so often happens," wrote Lenin in July, 1917, "that when events take a sudden turn, even an advanced party cannot adapt itself for some time to the new conditions. It goes on repeating yesterday's watchwords, watchwords which, under the new circumstances, have become empty of meaning and which have lost meaning 'unexpectedly', just in proportion as the change of in events has been 'unexpected'."

Lessons of October p. 17

Tactics and Strategy

In politics as in war, tactics means the art of conducting isolated operations; strategy means the art of victory, that is the actual seizure of power.

p. 18

Propaganda and Action

And it is an extremely sudden change, when the party of the Proletariat passes from preparation, from propaganda and organisation and agitation, to an actual struggle for power and an actual insurrection against the bourgeoisie. Those in the party who are irresolute, or sceptical, or compromising, or cowardly . . . oppose the insurrection, they look for theoretical arguments to justify their opposition, and they find them, all ready made, among their opponents of yesterday.

Trotsky 19

PAGE 72

"It is necessary to direct ourselves, not by old formulas, but by new realities."
Lenin (p. 25)

He always fought for the future against the past.

41

. . . But a moment comes when the habit of thinking that the enemy is stronger becomes the main obstacle to victory.

Trotsky 48

. . . But in such circumstances not every party will have its Lenin.

. . . What does it mean to lose the moment? . . .

All the art of tactics consists in this, to match the moment when the combination of circumstances is most favourable . . .

(Circumstances had produced the combination and Lenin said) The crisis must be settled in one way or another. 'Now or never' repeated Lenin.

p. 52

PAGE 73

The strength of a revolutionary party grows to a certain point, after which the contrary may happen . . .[97]

"To hesitate is crime" wrote . . . (Lenin) . . . in the beginning of October, "To wait for the Congress of Soviets is a childish playing with formalities, a disgraceful playing with formalities, it is betraying the revolution."

Opportune Moment

Twice is an important factor in politics; it is thousand times more so in war and revolution. Things can be done today that cannot be done tomorrow. To rise in arms, to defeat the enemy, to seize power, may be possible today, and tomorrow may be impossible. But, you will say, to seize power means changing the course of history; is it possible that such a thing can depend on a delay of 24 hours? Even so, when it comes to an armed insurrection, events are not measured by the long yards of politics but by short yards of war. To lose a few weeks, a few days, sometimes even one day, may mean giving up the revolution, may mean capitulation.

Political cunning is always dangerous, especially in a revolution. You may deceive the enemy, but you may confuse the masses who are following you.

[97] Last words are indistinct.

PAGE 74

Hesitation

Hesitation on the part of the leaders, and felt by their followers, is generally harmful in politics; but in the case of an armed insurrection, it is a deadly danger.

War

. . . "War is War"; come what may, there must be no hesitation or loss of time.

The Inefficient Leaders

. . . There are two kinds of leaders who incline to drag the party back at the moment when it should go fastest. One kind always tends to see overwhelming difficulties and obstacles in the way of revolution, and looks at them—consciously or unconsciously—with the desire of avoiding them. They alter Marxism into a system, for explaining why revolutionary action is impossible.

The other kind are mere superficial agitators. They see never any obstacles until they break their heads against them. They think they can avoid real difficulties by floods of oratory. They look at everything with supreme optimism, and, naturally, change right over when something has actually to be done.

p. 80[98]

PAGE 101

Sociology

Value

1 quarter corn = X/cost of iron. What does this question tell us? It tells us that in two different things—in 1 quarter of corn and X cost of iron—there exists in equal qualities something common to both. The two things must therefore be equal to a third, which in itself in neither the one or the other. . . Let us now consider the residue of each of these products; it consists of the same unsubstantial reality in each, a mere congelation of homogenous human labour, of labour power expended without regard to the mode of its expenditure. All these things now tell us that human labour power has been expended in their production, that labour is embodied in them. When looked at as crystals of this social substance, common to all, they are '*values*.'

Marx, "Capital", English Translation (pp. 3–4, 5).

98 Pages 75 to 100 are missing. The next page number is 101 (74) and starts with 'Sociology', which may be treated as a distinct section of the Notebook.

Law

"Society, however, does not rest upon law. This is a legal fiction. Rather the law must rest on society. It must be the expression of the interest and needs of society which result from the social and invariably material method of production as against the arbitrariness of the industrial. As for Napoleon Code, which I have in my hand, that has not engendered modern civil society. The society which arose in the 18th century and developed in the 19th finds in the Code only a legal expression. As soon as that no longer corresponds to social conditions, it is merely so much waste paper. . . The law necessarily changed with the changing conditions of life. The maintaining of the old law against the new needs and demands of the social development is at bottom nothing but a hypocritical assertion (in accord with the spirit of the age) of special interest against the common interest."

Marx (Before the Court of Jury of Cologne)[99]

Masses

"The people is a fat and motley beast, ignorant of its prowess and hence enduring burdens, lash and cudgel. Driven it is by a feeble child, whom it can shake off in an instant. But it fears that child and so serves all its whims and fancies, never realising how much it itself is feared by that child. . . Marvellous thing! They hang themselves with their own hands and send themselves to jails and bring upon themselves war and death for a single farthing, paid to them out of the many that they themselves have given to the King. Everything between heaven and earth belongs to them, but they do not know it, and should anyone tell them that, they would knock that man down and kill him."

Tommasso Campanella[100]

99 'The Trial of the Rhenish District Committee of Democrats' by Karl Marx, February 1849. The trial of the Rhenish District Committee of Democrats took place on February 8, 1849. Karl Marx, Karl Schapper and the lawyer Schneider II were summoned to the Cologne jury court, accused of incitement to revolt in connection with the Committee's appeal of November 18, 1848, on the refusal to pay taxes. They were acquitted. The backdrop to these happenings was the revolutionary ferment in Europe in 1848.

100 Tommaso Campanella (1568–1639), Italian poet and philosopher. Dominion Monk. Author of *City of Sun* (1623) describing a utopian society. Wrote love lyrics in Italian and on theology in Latin.

PAGE 102

"Marxism Versus Socialism" by Vladimir G. Simkhovitch[101]
Ph. D., Columbia University. (1908-12)
He criticises all the Theories of Marx one by one and refutes all:

1. Theory of Value
2. Economic Interpretation of History
3. Concentration of Wealth in fewer hands i.e., the capitalists, and elimination of middle class altogether and swarming of the Proletariats class
4. Theory of increasing misery, leading to the
5. Inevitable crises of the Modern State and social order.

He concludes that Marxism solely rests on these fundamental theories and refutes them one by one, concluding that all the vague apprehensions about the hurrying avalanche of the Revolution has proved futile till now. The middle class is not diminishing but growing. Rich class is growing in number, and the mode of production and consumption is also changing along with the circumstances, hence the reforms in the condition of the workers can avoid any sort of friction. It is not the growing poverty that is the cause of the social unrest, but it is the concentration of the poor classes in Industrial Centres that the class consciousness is growing. Hence all this hue and cry.

PAGE 103

Preface to Les Miserables

So long as there shall exist, by virtue of law and custom, a social damnation artificially creating hells in the midst of civilisation, and complicating the destiny which is divine with a fatality which is human; so long as three problems of the age—the degradation of man through poverty, the ruin of woman through hunger, the crippling of children through ignorance—are not solved; so long as in certain regions, social asphyxia is possible—in other words, and from a still wider point of view,—so long as ignorance and wretchedness exist on the earth, books like this cannot be useless.

Victor Hugo[102]

101 Vladimir G. Simkhovitch (1874–1959), author of *Towards the Understanding of Jesus* and *Marxism versus Socialism* (1913).

102 Victor (Marie) Hugo (1802–85), French poet, dramatist and novelist, and a leader of Romanticism. Wrote his classic *Les Miserables* in 1862. Other works include *Hernani* (a play, 1830), *Notre Dame de Paris* (novel, 1831), *La Legenede des Siecles* (history, 1859). Politically active, he was often exiled.

A Judge Defined

"A judge callous to the pain he inflicts loses the right to judge"

Rabindranath Tagore[103]

"But what unresisting martyrdom fails to do, righteous and resisting force does and renders tyranny impotent to do further harm."[104]

"Rather get killed than converted" was the cry prevalent amongst the Hindus then. But Ram Das rose and exclaimed 'No! not thus! Better get killed than converted" is good enough; but it would be better so to strive as neither to get killed nor violently converted, by killing the forces of violence itself. Get killed if that must be, but get killed while killing to conquer—conquer in the cause of Righteousness.

Hindu Pad Padshahi p. 181–82[105]

PAGE 104

All Legislators Defined as Criminals

"All legislators and rulers of men commencing with the earliest down to Lycurgus, Solon, Mahomet, Napoleon etc. etc. have, one and all, been criminals, for, whilst giving new laws, they have naturally broken through older ones which had been faithfully observed by society and transmitted by its progenitors.

Pp. 205 Crime and Punishment Dostovsky[106]

103 From 'The Mother's Prayer' from *The Fugitive and Other Poems* (1921).

104 Source and other details not available

105 This is probably a quotation from Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, *Hindu-Pad-Padshahi; or, A Review of the Hindu Empire of Maharashtra* (Madras, 1925).

106 Feodor Mikhailovich Dostoevski (1821–81), author of *Crime and Punishment* (1866). His other well-known books include *The Idiot* (1868) and *The Brothers Karamazov* (1879–80). Dostoyevski has apparently used the term 'criminals' for law breakers, and suggested that all law-givers tend to break the existing laws or codes of society. Lycurgus was the reputed founder of the constitution of ancient Sparta. Scholars differ about his being a 'god' or a 'hero'. His biographer, Plutarch (*c.* AD 46–120) called him 'the law-giver', while according to Herodotus (*c.* 484–424 BC), he changed 'all the customs'. Solon was an Athenian statesman (*c.* 639–559 BC) who revised the constitution to create a limited democracy and introduce land reforms in ancient Athens/Greece. If the reference is to Prophet Mohammed (*c.* AD 570–632) he has been mentioned here as a law-giver—as the founder of Islamic laws based on the Holy Quran as revealed to him—to suggest that he had to break away from the old laws or customs prevailing in the Arab lands. Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821), is, of course, mentioned here for his *Code Napoleon* enforced/adopted in Europe.

"A true politician", says Burke, "always considers how he shall make the most of the existing materials of his country."[107]

PAGE 105

Jurisprudence

Law:

1. Legal exposition	}	as it exists.
2. Legal History		as it developed.
3. Science of Legislation		as it ought to be.

1. Theoretical	(i) Philosophy.	Supplying foundation for the science
2. General	Jurisprudence	

1. Analytical
2. Historical } Jurisprudence
3. Ethical

1. Analytical jurisprudence explains the first principles of Law. It deals with:
   (a) Conception of Civil Law
   (b) Relation between Civil and other Laws
   (c) Various constituent ideas that constitute the idea of Law viz. State, Sovereignty and administration of justice.
   (d) Legal sources of Law and Theory of Legislation etc.
   (e) Scientific arrangements of Law
   (f) Legal rights
   (g) Theory of Legal (civil and criminal) liability
   (h) Other legal conceptions.

PAGE 106

2. Historical Jurisprudence deals with the general principles governing the origin and development of Law; legal conceptions. It is the history.
3. Ethical Jurisprudence: is concerned with the theory of justice in its relation to Law.

107 Edmund Burke (1729–97), British statesman and writer. Born in Dublin, he also became a prominent Whig orator and pamphleteer. In *Thoughts on the Present Discontents* (1770) advocated less concern in American Colonies instlgated the trial of Warren Hastings (1785–94). Denounced the French Revolution in *Reflection on the French Revolution in France* (1780).

Law and Justice

The total disregard of the ethical implications of the law tends to reduce analytical jurisprudence to a system rather arid formation.

in England

Two different words, "Law" and "justice" are a constant reminder that these are two different things and not the same thing. And their use tends to hide from view the real and intimate relation which exists between them.

& in Continent

(Rechet: Right = Droit: Law)

Continental speech conceals the difference between "law" and "right", whereas English speech conceals the connection between them.

PAGE 107

Law

"We term any kind of rule or canon whereby actions are framed a law".

Hooker[108]

"Law in its most general sense signifies a rule of action, and is indiscriminately to all kinds of action whether rational or irrational, animals or inanimate. Thus we say, the Laws of motion, of gravitation, of optics, of nature and of nations."

Blackstone[109]

Kinds of Laws

1. Imperative Law
2. Physical Law or Scientific Law
3. Natural or Moral Law
4. Conventional Law
5. Customary Law
6. Practical or Technical Law
7. International Law
8. Civil Law or the Law of the State.

108 Richard Hooker (1554–1600), English theologian who codified principles of Anglicanism in *Of the Lawes of Ecclesiastical Politie.*

109 Sir William Blackstone (1723–80), English Jurist, author of *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1765–69), an authoritative book on English legal doctrine.

PAGE 108

1. Imperative Law means a rule of action imposed upon men by some authority which enforces obedience to it.

The sanction of Imperative Law-1- Punishment, Wars etc.

'A Law is a command which obliges a person or persons to a course of conduct.'

Austin[110]

Positive morality in society also amounts to the Imperative Laws.

Hobbes' View:[111]

It is men and arms that make the force and power of the Laws.

Hobbes

2. Physical Law is an expression of actions as they are. (Moral Law or the Law of Reason is an expression of actions as they ought to be).

3. Natural or Moral Law means the principles of natural right and wrong—the principles of natural justice including all rightful actions.

Justice being of two kinds—the Positive and Natural.

Natural justice is justice as it is indeed and in truth.

Positive justice is justice as it is conceived, recognised and expressed.

PAGE 109

4. Conventional Law: is any rule or system of rules agreed upon by persons for the regulation of their conduct. Agreement is a law for the parties to it.

5. Customary Law: is any rule of action which is actually observed by men—any rule which is the expression of some actual uniformity of voluntary action. Custom is law of those who observe it.

6. Practical or Technical Law: consists of rules for the attainment of some practical end. In games, there are both 'Conventional Laws' and 'Practical Laws', the former being the rules agreed upon by players, the latter being the rules to make the play a success or for the successful playing of the game.

110 John Austin (1911–1960), British philosopher who investigated linguistic use for knowledge. Author of *How to Do Things with Words*.

111 Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) English philosopher, author of the celebrated *Leviathan* (1651; on the social contract theory) and several other works.

7. International Law: consists of those rules which govern sovereign states in their relations and conduct towards each other.

(i) Express Laws (Treaties etc.)

(ii) Implied Laws (Customary)

Again divisible into two kinds:

(i) Common Laws (between all nations)

(ii) Particular Laws (between two or more particular nations).

8. Civil Law: Law of the State or of the land; is applied in the courts of justice.

PAGE 110

Punishment

Political Crimes

We agree with the great body of legislators in thinking, that though, in general a person who has been a party to a criminal design, which has not been carried into effect, be not severely dealt with, yet an exception to this rule must be made with respect to high offences against the State; for State crimes, and especially the most heinous and formidable State crimes, have this peculiarity, that, if they are successfully committed, the criminal is almost always secure from punishment. The murderer is in greater danger after his victim is despatched than before. The thief is in greater danger after the purse is taken than before; but the rebel is out of danger as soon as he has subverted the Govt. As the penal law is impotent against a successful rebel, it is consequently necessary that it should be made strong and sharp against the first beginning of rebellion . . .

II L.C.C. Judgement 1906 pp. 120[112]

PAGE 111

Punishment

Dream that merited Capital Punishment

When *Marsays* dreamed that he had cut *Dionysius*[113] throat, the tyrant put him to death, arguing that he would have never dreamt of such a thing by night, had he not thought of it by day.

112 Details not available.

113 Dionysius the Elder (*c.* 430–367 BC) Greek political leader in Sicily, became tyrant of Syracuse (406 BC) and resisted Carthage.

Capital Punishment and Draco's Law[114]

The Laws of Draco affixed the penalty of death in almost all crimes alike, to petty thefts, for instance, as well as to sacrilege and murder; and the only explanation Draco is said to have given of that is, that minor offences deserve that penalty, and he could find no greater for more heinous.

Punishment is thought by many philosophers to be a *necessary evil.*

State and Man

The State is not really an end in itself and man is not here for the sake of Law or the State, but that these rather exist for man.[115]

PAGE 112

Justice

The maintenance of right within a political community by means of the physical force of the State.

It has replaced the personal vengeance, when men avenged their own wrongs by themselves or with the help of their kinsmen. In those days, the principle of 'Might is Right' worked.

Civil and Criminal Justice

Civil Justice enforces rights. Criminal justice punishes wrongs.

A man claims a debt that is due to him, or the restoration of property wrongfully detained from him. This is Civil.

In a Criminal Case, the defendant is accused of a wrong. Court visits the accused with a penalty for the duty already disregarded and for a right already violated as where he is hanged for murder and imprisoned for theft.

PAGE 113

Both in civil and original proceedings, there is a *wrong* complained of

In civil it amounts to a claim of right;

In *criminal* it amounts nearly to an accusation of wrong

Civil justice is concerned primarily with the plaintiff and his rights;

Criminal with defendent and his offence.

114 Draco (Dracon) 7th century BC, statesman of Athens who codified the previously unwritten laws. The word 'draconian' is derived from his name, since his laws were rather severe, with the death penalty for even minor offenses.

115 Unclear if this is a quote.

The Purposes of *Criminal Justice*

Punishment

1. Deterrent: Chief end of the Law is to make the evil-doer an example and a warning to all that are like-minded with him. It makes every offence, "*an ill bargain to the effender.*" (Changing motive)
Then this cannot be useful in cases of disinterested 'offenders' such as politicals. It can be an evil bargain for him!

2. Preventive: In the second place, it is preventive or disabling. Its special purpose is to prevent a repetition of wrongdoing by the disablement of the offender.

Justification of Capital Punishment

We hang murderers not merely that it may deter others, but for the same reason for which we kill snakes, namely because it is better for us that they should be out of the world than in it.

3. Reformative: Offences are committed through the influence of motives upon characters, and may be prevented either by a *change of motives* or *by a change of character.*

Deterrent punishment acts in the former event[116] while *Reformative* deals with the second.

PAGE 114[117]

Advocates of "Reformative theory" admit only such forms of penalty as are subservient to the education and discipline of the criminal, and reject all those which (are) profitable only as deterrent or disabling. Death is in their view no fitting penalty; '*we must cure our criminals not kill them.*' Flogging and other corporal punishments are condemned as relics of barbarism. Such penalties are considered by them to be degrading and brutalising both to those who suffer and to those who inflict them.

Result of severe punishment. Dangerous and desperate class of criminals springs up.

The more efficient the coercive action of the State, the more successful it is in restraining all normal human beings from the dangerous paths, and the higher becomes the proportion of degeneracy among those who break the law.

116 Words unclear.

117 This page probably has Bhagat Singh's own comments.

4. Retributive Punishment: The most horrible theory! People thinking in these terms are really maintaining the barbaric faculties of ancient and pre-civilisation times.

It gratifies the instinct of revenge or retaliation, which exists not merely in the individual wronged, but also by way of sympathetic extension in society at large.

According to this view, it is right and proper that evil should be returned for evil. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth is deemed a plain and self-sufficient rule of natural justice. *Punishment becomes an end an itself.*

PAGE 115

Punishment an evil

Punishment is in itself an evil, and can be justified only as the means of attaining a greater good.

But the—supporters of Retributive theory argue this way—"Guilt plus punishment is equal to innocence".

"The wrong whereby he has transgressed the law of right, has incurred a debt. Justice requires that the debt be paid . . . the first object of punishment is to satisfy the outraged law."

Peine forte et dure: was death with torture . . . judgement for which was delivered as follows:

> "That you be taken back to the prison whence you came, to a long dungeon into which no light can enter; then you be laid on your back on the bare floor, with a cloth round your loins, but elsewhere naked, that there be set upon your body a weight of iron as great as you can bear, and greater; that you have no substance save, on the first day, the morsels of the coarsest bread; on the second day, three draughts of stagnant water from the pool nearest to the prison door; on the third day again three morsels of bread as before, and such bread and such water alternately from day to day until you die."

This punishment was inflicted on people of both the sexes alike, for all sorts of offences not extraordinary.

PAGE 116

Foreign Subjugation

Subjection to foreign yoke is one of the most potent causes of the decay of nations.

Prof. A.E. Ross[118]

118 Identity unclear.

Domination of a democracy and Foreign Nations
No rule over a foreign people is so exacting and so merciless in its operations as that of a democracy.

Lalaji[119]

Marriage

Dr. Tagore holds that the marriage system all over the world—and not only in India—from the earliest ages till now, is a barrier in the way of the true union of man and woman, which is possible only when society shall be able to offer a large field for the creative work of woman's special faculty, without detracting in the creative work in the home.[120]

PAGE 117

Citizen and Man

The Spartan Pedarctes presented himself for admission to the council of the Three Hundred and was rejected; he went away rejoicing that there were 300 Spartans better than himself. I suppose he was in earnest, there is no reason to doubt it,

That was a citizen.

A Spartan mother had five sons with the army. A Helot arrived; trembling she asked his news. "Your five sons are slain."

"Vile slave, was that what I asked thee?"

119 Lala Lajpat Rai (1865–1928), known for his radical leanings in the Indian National Congress along with his contemporaries Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal. Deported with Ajit Singh (Bhagat Singh's uncle) in 1907 to Mandlay (Burma) for his part in an agitation of canal settlers in the Canal Colonies. During his externment and extended visit to USA. he became a mentor to many Indians, including M.N. Roy; and authored *Arya Samaj* (1915), *Young India* (1917), and *National Education in India* (1917/20). Later wrote *Unhappy India* (1928) Also *England's Debt to India: A Historical Narration of Britain's Fiscal Policy*. Presided over the 1920 special session of the INC which launched the non-cooperation movement. Imprisoned for sedition in 1921. Released in August 1923, was elected to the Legislative Assembly. Associated for years with the trade union movement and attended the International Labour Conference at Geneva in 1926. In later years, he had gravitated towards the Hindu Mahasabha. Moved the resolution to boycott the visit of Simon Commission and later personally led a huge protest demonstration during the visit of the Commission to Lahore. Was brutally attacked in a lathi charge and later succumbed to his injury. Bhagat Singh and his comrades killed Saunders to avenge his death.

120 It is not clear if this is a reference to Rabindranath Tagore, or someone else.

"We have won the victory". She hastened to the temple to render thanks to the gods.

That was a citizen.

Emile pp. 8[121]

Life and Education

People think only of preserving their child's life; this is not enough, he must be taught to preserve his own life when he is a man, to bear the buffets of fortune, to brave wealth and poverty, to live at need among the snows of Iceland or on the scorching rocks of Malta. In vain you guard against death; he must needs die; and even if you do not kill him with your precautions, they are mistaken.

Teach him to live rather than to avoid death! Life is not breath, but action! The use of our senses, our mind, our faculties, every part of ourselves which makes us conscious of our being. *Life consists less in length of days than in keen sense of living*. A man may be buried at a hundred and may never have lived at all. He would have fared better had he died young.

Emile pp. 10

PAGE 118

Truth

Truth however does not lead to fortune, and the people confer neither embassies, nor professorships nor pensions.

Rousseau 122
S.C.[122]

Crime and Criminals

". . . With readymade opinions one cannot judge of crime. Its philosophy is a little more complicated than people think. It is acknowledged that neither convict prisons, nor the hulks; nor any system of hard labour ever cured a criminal. These forms of chastisement only punish him and reassure society against the offences he might commit. Confinement, regulation, and excessive

121 Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778), French philosopher, regarded as founder of Romanticism. His book on political theory *The Social Contract* (1762) described an ideal state in which sovereignty vested with the people as a whole and individuals would retain freedom by submitting to the "general will". His novel *Emile* (1762) dealt with the theme of education. Also wrote his *Confessions* in several volumes. He did not live to see it, but he was much idolized during the French Revolution. In the last years of his life, he was not fully sane.

122 Rousseau, *Social Contract* (1762). This quotation appears at the end of chapter 2.

work have no effect but to develop with these men profound hatred, a thirst for forbidden enjoyment and frightful recalcitrations. On the other hand, I am convinced that the celebrated cellular system gives results, which are specious and deceitful. It deprives a criminal of his force of his energy, energates his soul by weakening and frightening it, at last exhibits a dried up memory as a model of repentance and amendment."

The House of Dead pp. 17
Fedore Dostoivsky[123]

PAGE 119

Desire Vs. Contentment

A conscious being whose powers were equal to his desires would be perfectly happy . . . The mere limitation of our desires is not enough, for if they were less than our powers, part of our faculties would be idle, and we should not enjoy our whole being, neither is the mere extension of our powers, enough, for if our desires were also increased, we should only be the more miserable. True happiness consists in decreasing the difference between our desires and our powers.

44 Emile

PAGE 120

Bourgeois revolution is germinated by the circumstance already existing in its predecessor regime.[124]

"The bourgeois revolution usually ends with the seizure of power. For the proletarian revolution the seizure of power is only a beginning; power, when seized, is used as a lever for the transformation of the old economy and for the organisation of a new one."

p. 20

"There still remain two gigantic and extremely difficult tasks—(even after the overthrow of the existing regime in one country—say Russia).

"First of all comes the internal organisation.

"The second crucial problem is that of the world revolution . . . the need to solve international problems, the need to promote the world revolution—

123 Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoevsky (1821–81), among the greatest Russian novelists. *The House of Dead* is a novel published in 1862, and is based on his own experience of spending four years in a Siberian prison.

124 Some of the following passages from Lenin are hard to trace. It is possible that some are in fact not exact quotations, but Bhagat Singh's paraphrasing of Lenin.

(without which communist regime cannot be quite safe from the international capitalist threat.)

p. 21–22

PAGE 121

I. If the proletariat is to win over the majority of the population, it must first of all overthrow the bourgeoisie and seize the powers of the State.

II. Next, it must establish the Soviet authority breaking up the old State apparatus, and thus at one blow counteracting the influence which the bourgeoisie and the petty-bourgeoisie apostles of class collaboration exercise over the working (though non-proletariat) masses.

III. Thirdly, the proletariat must completely and finally destroy the influence which the bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie compromisers exercise over the majority of the working (though non-proletarian) masses; it must do so by the revolutionary satisfaction of the economic needs of these masses at the cost of the exploiters.

Nikolai Lenin p. 23[125]

"Dictatorship of the proletariat means the masses guided and directed by the Communist Party. Though party exercise substantial influence or control, still it is not all. Apart from its guidance, the 'will' of the masses is necessary for the achievement of any particular object.

"We have to admit that the broad masses of the workers must be led and guided by the class conscious minority. And that is the Party. Party has Trade Unions to link the Party with proletariat labour, . . . 'Soviets' to link it with all the labouring masses in the political field, 'Cooperatives' in the economic field

PAGE 122

especially to link the peasantry, 'League of Youth' to train communists from amongst the rising generation. Finally, Party itself is the sole guiding force within the Dictatorship of the Proletariat."

125 Lenin, 'The Constituent Assembly Elections and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat', December 1919, *Collected Works*, volume 30.

PAGE 123

Figures[126]

Inequality of incomes:

Production:

Pre-war United Kingdom's (England's) annual production amounted to	£2000,000,000
Gained through foreign investments	£200,000,000
Total	£2200,000,000

Distribution:

1/9th of the whole population i.e. capitalist or bourgeois took away 1/2 of the total production—i.e. £ 1100,000,000

(least average income annual £ 160)

2/9th of the whole population i.e. petty bourgeoisie took away 1/3 of the remaining half or l/6th of the whole—i.e. £ 300,000,000

(average income less than £ 160 a year)

2/3rd of the population i.e. manual labour or proletariat got the rest—i.e. £ 800,000,000

(average income £ 60 yearly)

United States America: in 1890

40% of total production was received by the owners of means

60% of total production was given to all workers.

PAGE 124

Aim of Life

"The aim of life is no more to control mind, but to develop it harmoniously, not to achieve salvation hereafter, but to make the best use of it here below, and not to realise truth, beauty and good only in contemplation, but also in the actual experience of daily life; social progress depends not upon the ennoblement of the few but on the enrichment of the many; and spiritual democracy or universal brotherhood can be achieved only when there is an equality of opportunity in the social, political and industrial life."[127]

126 Source not given.

127 Source of quotation uclear. Page numbers 125 to 165 are missing.

Science of the State:[128]

Ancient Polity; Rome and Sparta; Aristotle and Plato:

Subordination of the individual to the state was the dominant feature of these ancient polities, Sparta and Rome. In Hellas or in Rome, the citizen had but a few personal rights; his conduct was largely subject to public censorship, and his religion was imposed by State authority. The only true citizens and member of the Sovereign body being an aristocratic caste of freemen, whose manual work is performed by slaves possessing no civil rights.

Socrates:[129]

Socrates is represented as contending that whoever, after reaching man's estate, voluntarily remains in a city, should submit to the Govt. even when he deems its laws unjust; accordingly, on the ground that he would break his *covenant* with the State by escaping from prison into exile, he determines to await the execution of an unjust sentence.

Plato:[130] (Social Contract)

He traces the origin of society and the State to mutual need, for men as isolated beings are incapable of satisfying their manifold wants. He, while depicting a kind of idealised Sparta says, "In an ideal State, philosophers should rule; and to this aristocracy or government of the best, the body of citizens would owe implicit obedience." He emphasises on the careful training and education of citizens.

Aristotle:[131]

He was the first to disentangle politics from ethics, though he was careful not to sever them. "The majority of men", he argued, "are ruled by their passions rather than by reason, and the State must therefore, train them to virtue by a life-long course of discipline, as in Sparta. Until political society is

128 No source or reference has been indicated for this section. These appear to be Bhagat Singh's notes, rather than quotations.

129 Socrates (*c.* 470–399BC), Greek philosopher, tried and condemned for 'corrupting' the youth. Writings of Plato, Xenophon and Aristotle have preserved his ideas.

130 Plato (*c.* 427–347 BC), Greek philosopher, disciple of Socrates. Author of numerous works, and founder of the Assembly in Athens (387 BC) where Aristotle was a student.

131 Aristotle (384–322 BC), Greek philosopher, pupil of Plato and tutor of Alexander the Great. Works include *Metaphysics*, *Nicomachean Ethics*, *Politics and Poetics*.

instituted, there is no administration of justice. . . . (but) it is necessary to enquire into the best constitution, and best system of legislation ..".

PAGE 166

"The germ of the State is found in the family or household. From the union of many households arose the village community. . . members being subject to *patriarchal government*.

"By the association of several villages *was formed the State*, a natural, independent, and self-sufficing organisation.

"But while the household is ruled monarchically, in constitutional governments, the subjects are free and on equality with their rulers.

"Natural sociability and mutual advantage implements union. Man is by nature a political (*social*) animal.

"The State is much more than an alliance which individuals can join or leave without effect, for the independent or cityless man is unscrupulous and savage, something different from a citizen."

Plato: Plato had anticipated this conception of the State as a body whose members *combine harmoniously for a common end*.

Aristotle: Aristotle held that where freedom and equality prevail, there should be alternate rule and subjection, but it is best, if possible, that the same persons should always rule.

In opposition to *Plato's communism* he argued in favour of duly *regulated private property*, considering that only a moral unity is possible or desirable in the State.

Kinds of Govts.

He divided governments into monarchies, aristocracies, and republics and their respective perversions, tyrannies, oligarchies and democracies, according as the supreme power is in the hands of one or a few or the many, and according as the end is the general good or the private interests of the rulers, regard also being paid to freedom, wealth, culture and nobility.

Each polity consists of three parts: (1) the *deliberative*, (2) the *executive*, *and* (3) the judicial bodies. Citizenship is constituted neither by residence, nor by the possession of legal rights, but by participation in judicial power and Public office.

The many, having attained a certain standard of morality, should rule, for though individually inferior, they are collectively wiser and more virtuous than a select few. But, while undertaking all deliberative and judicial functions, *they should be excluded from the highest executive offices*. The *best Polity* is

that in which the middle class between the very rich and the very poor controls the govt., for that class has most permanent life, and is the most conformable to reason, as well as the most capable of constitutional action. This is virtually an affirmation that *sovereignty should reside in the majority* of the citizens, slaves of course being ignored.

PAGE 167

Democracies agree in being based on *equality in respect of personal liberty*, which implies the eligibility of all citizens to hold, or elect to the offices of State, and the rule of each over all and of all over each in turn.

Aristotle, like Plato, treated democracy as a debased form of Govt. and held that it is more suitable to large states than any others.

Epicureans: "Justice", said Epicurus "is nothing in itself, but merely a compact (as the basis of justice) of expediency to prevent mutual injury."[132]

Stoic(ism): A disciple of the philosopher Zeno[133] (340–260 BC) who opened his school in a colonnade called the 'Stoa Poiklite' (painted porch) at Athens. Later Roman stoics were *Cato the Younger*,[134] Seneca,[135] Marcus Aurelius.[136] The word stoic literally means, 'one indifferent to pleasure or pain'.

Stoicism is a school of ancient philosophy strongly opposed to Epicureanism in its view of life and duty; indifferent to pleasure or pain.

Cynicism: A sect of philosophers founded by *Antisthenes*[137] of Athens (born c. 444 BC) characterised by an ostentatious contempt for riches, arts, science and amusements. They are called Cynics because of their morose manners. Cynicism is sometimes used to denote the contempt for human nature.

132 Epicurus (341–270 BC), Greek philosopher, founder of Epicureanism, and an atomic materialist.

133 Zeno of Citium (333–264 BC), Hellenistic Stoic philosopher, who believed that "tranquility can best be reached through indifference to pleasure and pain".

134 Mareus Porcius Cato (95–46 BC), known as Cato the Younger, Roman politician and statesman, a follower of Stoic philosophy.

135 Lucius Appaeus Seneca (*c.* 4 BC–AD 65) Roman writer & statesman, tutor of Nero, wrote essays on Stoicism, also tragedies—*Medea, Phaedra, Oedipus*. For a while, virtual ruler of Rome, later ordered to commit suicide.

136 Marcus Aurelius Antoninus—originally Marcus Annius Verus (AD 121–180), Roman philosopher and Emperor (AD161–180). Defended borders against German tribes. Also wrote *Meditations*, a classic Stoic interpretation.

137 Antisthenes (*c.* 444–365 BC), founder of the cynic school of philosophy, studied rhetoric in his youth and came under influence of Socrates.

Epicureans: Epicurus (341–270 BC) was a Greek philosopher, who taught that pleasure was the chief good. Epicurean is used to denote one devoted to luxuries of the table or given to sensual enjoyment.

PAGE 168

Roman Polity

'Little of direct importance was added to political theory by the Romans, but in a closely allied department viz jurisprudence—they made contributions of deep interest and value.'

Jus-Civik, Jus-Gentium

Under the Republic, there had grown up, beside the "Civil Law" (Jus-Civik) a collection of rules and principles called Jus Gentium (Law of Nations) which represented the common features prevailing among the Italian tribes.

Jus Naturale

The great Roman juris-consults (experts in the science of Law) [deriving the idea from the Stoics] came gradually to identify the Law of Nature (Jus Naturale) with the Jus Gentium.

They taught that this Law was divine and eternal, and that it was superior in majesty and validity to the laws of particular States. *Natural Law* was supposed to be actually existent and bound up with Civil Law.

In the Antonian Era[138], when Roman Law attained a high development and Stoic doctrines were most influential, the jurists formulated as juridicial but not as political principles the maxims that:

"all men were born free"

and that, by the Law of Nature, "*All men are equal*"—the implication being that although the Civil Law recognised class distinction, all mankind were equal before the Law of Nature.

Social Contract in Roman Polity

Though the Roman jurists did not postulate a contract as the origin of Civil Society, but there is a tendency to deduce recognised rights and obligations *from a supposed, but non-existent contract.*

With regard to sovereignty, the citizens assembled in the Comitia Tributa exercised the supreme power during the golden days of the Republic.

138 After Antonius Pius (AD 86–161) Roman Emperor (AD 138–161). His reign was marked by peace and sound administration.

Under the Empire, the sovereign authority was vested in the Emperor, and according to the later juris consults, the people, by the Lex Regia, delegated the supreme command to each Emperor at the beginning of his reign, thus conferring on him all their rights to govern and legislate.

PAGE 169

Middle Ages

Thomas Aquinas:[139] (1226–1274) is said to be the chief representative of the middle ages political Theory. He following Roman jurists, recognised a natural law, the principles of which have been divinely implanted in human reason, together with positive laws that vary in different States.

He held that the legislative power, the essential attribute of sovereignty, should be directed to the common good, and that, for the attainment of this end, *it should belong to the multitude* or *to their representative*, the prince. A mixed government of *monarch*, *nobles*, and *people*, with the *Pope* as final authority, seemed to him the best.

Marsilio of Padua[140] (died in 1328)

Idea of Contract

In his '*Defensor Pacis*', Marsilio of Padua advocated the doctrine of Popular Sovereignty, and *combated the papal pretensions to temporal power* that had been based on the Falso Decretals.

Sovereignty of the People

Since men adopted civil life for their mutual advantage, the Laws ought to be made by the body of citizens; for laws are not likely to be the best possible, nor to be readily obeyed, unless enacted by those whose interests are directly affected and who know what they need.

He affirmed that the *legislative power belongs to the people*, and that the legislature should institute the executive, which it may also change or depose.

Renaissance—Reformation

In Renaissance, all departments of knowledge were vitalised and the circumsribed philosophy—having served as a hand-maid of theology for a

139 St. Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) philosopher and theologian, whose major work was *Summa Theologiae* (1267–73). Bhagat Singh's date incorrect.

140 Marsilius of Padua (1270–1342), Italian political theorist, author of the extraordinary *Defensor Pacis*, on separation of Church and State, written for Emperor Louis IV in his struggle against the Pope. Bhagat Singh's date incorrect.

thousand years, rapidly gave place to a new philosophy of *Nature and man*, more, liberal, more profound, and more comprehensive.

Bacon recalled man from metaphysics to nature and actuality.[141]

Philosophy must begin with universal scepticism. But one fact is soon found to be indubitable: the existence of a thinking principle in man. *The existence of consciousness.*

Cartesian Philosophy

The appeal to subjective conviction, to the authority of the individual, which was so strongly emphasised in the Reformation, thus becomes the very basic of *Cartesian Philosophy.*

Cartesian = Relating to a French Philosopher Rene Descartes (1596–1650 AD) and his Philosophy.[142]

PAGE 170

New Period

After Reformation, the Papal authority having been shaken off, a wave of freedom swept minds of both the rulers and the people. But there was confusion. To settle new situation, great many thinkers began to meditate over the question of State. Different sechools grew up.

Machiavelli[143]

Machiavelli—the famous Italian political thinker thought the Republican form of Government to be the best one, but doubting the stability of such a form of government, he inculcated maxims of securing a strong princely rule and hence he wrote "The Prince".

His advocacy of *centralised government* had greatly affected political theory and practice in Europe.

141 Roger Bacon (*c.* 1214–1294) English scholar who placed considerable emphasis on empiricism, he was one of the earliest advocates of the modern scientific method in the West. Was imprisoned for heresy.

142 René Descartes (1596–1650), French philosopher and mathematician, after whom is named the Cartesian school of philosophy, based on distinction between spirit and matter, as expressed in his dictum: "I think therefore, I am", in his *Discourse on Matter* (1673). Also laid the foundations of analytic geometry and algebric notation, and contributed to the science of optics.

143 Niccolò di Bernardo dei Machiavelli (1467–1527), political philosopher, musician, poet, and romantic comedic playwright. A key figure of the Italian Renaissance, most widely known for his treatises on political theory (*The Prince*) and republicanism (*Discourses on Livy*).

Machiavelli was perhaps the first writer who treated "Politics" from a purely secular point of view.

Other Thinkers

Pact and Contract

Majority of others favoured the theory of pact or contract. [In Roman Law, a *pact* was the product of an agreement among individuals and fell short of a *contract*, which was a *pact* plus an obligation].

There were two different sects of these thinkers. The first one expounded the theory based on the Hebrew idea of covenant between God and man supplemented by the Roman idea of contract. It postulated a tacit contract between the government and the people.

The second or modern form, relates to the institution of Political Society by means of a compact among individuals. Prominent thinkers of this school were *Hooker*, *Hobbes*, *Locke*[144] and *Rousseau*.

Defenders of Popular Liberty

Huguenot[145]

The Vindiciae contra Tyrannos (1579), ascribed to *Huguenot Languet*,[146] contended that kings derive their power from the people's will, and that if a king violates the compact to observe the laws which he and the people promise conjointly at the institution of royalty, the *latter are absolved from allegiance*.

Buchanan[147]

(2) Buchanan also held that the king and people are mutually bound by a pact, and that its violation by the former entails forfeiture of his rights.

144 John Locke (1632–1704), English philosopher, leading empiricist, social contract theorist and author of several influential works, including *Two Treatises on Government* (1689) and *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690).

145 In the 16th and 17th centuries, the name Huguenot was applied to a member of the Protestant Reformed Church of France, historically known as the French Calvinists.

146 Hubert Languet (1518–1581) French Huguenot, writer and diplomat. *Vindiciae contra tyrannos* which brought him fame, upheld the doctrine of resistance against tyranny, so long as it came from a properly constituted authority.

147 George Buchanan (1506–1582), Scottish historian and humanist scholar, author of *De Jure Regni apud Scales* (1579). In this work, composed in the form of a dialogue, Buchanan lays down the doctrine that the source of all political power is the people, that the king is bound by those conditions under which the supreme power was first committed to his hands, and that it is lawful to resist, even to punish, tyrants.

Jesuits[148]

(3) Even the Jesuits Bellarmine[149] and Mariana[150] argued that kings derived their authority from the people, but they are subject to Pope.

King James I (1609): James I[151] admitted this theory in a speech to Parliament in 1609, saying that "every just king in a settled kingdom is bound to observe that paction made to his people by his laws, in framing his government agreeable there unto."

Convention Parliament (1688)

Convention Parliament declared in 1688 that James II,[152] "having endeavoured to subvert the constitution by breaking the original contract between the king and people", had rendered the throne vacant.

Bodin (1586)[153]

'The first comprehensive political philosopher of modern times', Bodin, author of the 'Republic' (1577 and 1586) says that "*force* and *not a contract is the origin of a commonwealth*". Primitive patriarchal governments were overthrown by conquest and natural liberty was thus lost.

148 Jesuits, or members of the Society of Jesus, a Catholic Religious Order founded by St. Ignatius Loyola in 1540. A mendicant order whose members rely on alms for their support, and seek the spiritual perfection of all humans.

149 Roberto Francesco Romolo Cardinal Bellarmine (Italian: Bellarmino) (1542–1621), Italian theologian, entered the Society of Jesus in 1560, and was chosen in 1576 by the Pope to lecture on controversial theology in the new Roman College. According to him, the Pope had an indirect right to depose 'unworthy' rulers.

150 Juan de Mariana (1536–1624), Spanish historian and Jesuit. Went to Rome (1561) to teach theology, where Roberto Bellarmine was among his pupils. After service in Sicily, was sent to Paris in 1569, where his exposition of Thomas Acquinas' writings drew attention. Returned to Spain in 1674. He considered it lawful to overthrow a tyrant.

151 James I, King of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland (1566–1625). Succeeded to the throne of Scotland (as James VI) on the abdication of his mother, Mary, Queen of Scots, and to the English throne on the death of Queen Elizabeth I. He was in conflict with the Parliament when he asserted the Divine Right of Kings. A scholar (earlier tutored by George Buchanan) he also wrote several books.

152 James II (1633 to 1701), King of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. He alienated his subjects by his pro-Catholic policies and assertion of arbitrary rule. Fled to France after the Glorious Revolution of 1688.

153 Jean Bodin (1530–1596), French philosopher, author of *Six Livres da la Republique* (1956), advocated that the power of the sovereign should be modified by a democratic parliament.

In his opinion "*Sovereignty was the supreme power over citizens.*" He regarded "*Sovereignty as independent, indivisible, perpetural, inalienable and absolute power. He confused his idea of sovereignty with the then existing kingship.*

Althusius (1557–1638)[154]
He is notable for clearly asserting that *sovereignty resides in the people alone.* Kings being only their magistrates or administrators; and that the sovereign rights of the community are inalienable.

Grotius (1625)[155]
In his work, "De Jure Belli et Paris (1628), Grotius holds that *man has a strong desire for a peaceable and ordered society.* But he inculcates the theory of non-resistance and denies *that the people are always and everywhere sovereign*, or *that all government is established for the sake of the governed.* Sovereignty arises either from conquest or from consent; but he lays emphasis on the idea *that sovereign is the indivisible power.*

Hooker
He, in his 'Ecclesiastical Polity'—Book I (1592–3) postulates an original state of nature in which all men were equal and subject to no Law. Desire for a life suitable to man's dignity, and aversion to solitude, impelled then to unite in 'politic societies'. '*Natural inclination*' and an order expressly or secretly agreed upon touching the manner of their union in living together, were the two foundations of the present 'politic societies'. It is the latter that we call "the Laws of a Commonweal".

PAGE 172

Origin of State
Sovereignty: Legislative power controlling the Executive as well
'To take away all mutual grievance, injuries and wrongs, the only way was to ordain some kind of government, or common judge'. He admitted with Aristotle that the *origin of government was in kingship.* But he says 'Laws not only teach what is good, but also have a constraining force, derived from the

154 Johannes Althusius (1557–1638), a Calvinist philosopher and theologian. Often considered the intellectual father of modern federalism and an advocate of popular sovereignty.

155 Hugo Grotius (1583–1645), Dutch jurist and statesman, laid the foundations for international law.

consent of the governed, expressed either personally or through representatives'.

"Laws human of what kind so ever, are available [i.e. valid] by consent"

"Laws they are not which public approbation hath not made so."

Sovereignty of the people

Thus he clearly affirmed that sovereignty or legislative power resides ultimately in the people.

1620: Famous Declaration of the "Pilgrim Fathers"[156] on board the Mayflower (1620): "We do solemnly and mutually in the Presence of God and of one another covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil Body Politic.

1647: The Agree of the People of England: (another famous Puritan document, which emanated from the Army of the Parliament) (*1647*) also indicates the same tendency of mind.

1649: Milton:[157] In his "Tenure of Kings and Magistrates" (1649), he also propounds similar principles. He affirms that "all men naturally were born free". They "*agreed by common league* to bind each other from mutual injury and jointly to defend themselves against any that gave disturbance or opposition to such agreement. Hence came towns, cities and commonwealths! "This authority and power of self-defence and preservation being originally and naturally in every one of them and unitedly in all, was vested, in kings and magistrates as deputies and commissioners!"

"The Power of kings and magistrates is nothing else but what is only derivative, transferred, and committed to them in trust from the people to the common good of all, *in whom the power yet remain(s) fundamentally* and can not be taken from them without a violation of their natural birth-right. Hence nations may choose or depose kings, merely by the right and liberty of freeborn men to be governed as seems them best."

156 Pilgrim Fathers (1620), a group of Puritan objectors in the Church of England who sailed away in the *Mayflower* to escape persecution and settle in North America.

157 John Milton (1608–74), English poet who wrote great epics in blank verse like *Paradise Lost* (1667) and *Paradise Regained* (1671) despite having become blind after 1652. During the Protectorate (1653 onwards) he acted as Oliver Cromwell's Latin secretary.

PAGE 173

Theory of Divine Rights of Kings[158]

[Patriarchal Theory]

In this very age when great many thinkers were thus propounding these principles of 'Sovereignty of the People', there were other theorists, who tried to prove that kingdom(s) being enlarged families, the patriarchal authority of the head of a household was transferred by primogenitary descent to the representative of the first sovereign who could be proved to have reigned over any nation. *Monarchy was therefore presumed to rest on an indefeasible right, and the king was held responsible to God alone!* This was known as "*Divine Rights of Kings!*" This was known as the "*Patriarchal Theory!*"

Thomas Hobbes: In his various works written in 1642–1650–1651, he combined the doctrine of the unlimited authority of the sovereign, with the rival doctrine of an original compact of the people. Hobbes' defence of absolutism—passive obedience—was secular and rationalistic rather than theological. He regarded the happiness of the community (as a whole) as the great end of government.

Man an unsociable animal!

Perpetual danger forces them to form state!

Hobbes' philosophy is cynical. According to him a man's impulses are naturally directed to his own preservation and pleasure and he cannot aim at anything but their gratification. *Therefore man is unsociable by nature!* He says "in the natural state *every man is at war with his fellows*; and the life of everyone is in danger, solitary, poor, unsafe brutish and short."[159] It is the *fear of this sort of life that impelled them to political union*. Since mere pact wouldn't do, hence the establishment of '*supreme common power* the govt.'

'Conquest' or 'acquisition' and 'institution' the only basis of all states

Society is founded by "*acquisition*" i.e. by conquest or "*institution*" viz. by mutual contract or compact. In the latter case once the sovereign authority is established all must obey. Anybody rebelling must perish. He should be destroyed.

158 In all likelihood, these are not quotations, but Bhagat Singh's own observations.

159 While the second part of the quote is from *Leviathan*, the first is Bhagat Singh's (or someone else's) paraphrasing. The *Leviathan* itself does not contain these words. Indeed, it is interesting that Hobbes hardly ever uses the terms 'natural state' or 'state of nature'.

Theory of Divine Rights of kings:- In this very age when great many thinkers were thus propounding these principles of 'sovereignty of the people' there were other theorists, who tried to prove that kingdom being enlarged families, the patriarchal authority of the head of a household was transferred by primogeniture descent to the representative of the first sovereign who could be proved to have reigned over any nation. Monarchy was therefore presumed to rest on an indefeasible right, and the king was held responsible to God alone! This was known as ~~the theory of~~ 'Divine Rights of kings!' This was known as the 'Patriarchal Theory!

[Patriarchal Theory!]

Thomas Hobbes:- In his various works written in 1642 – 1650 – 1651 he combined the doctrine of the unlimited authority of the sovereign, with the usual doctrine of an original compact of the people. Hobbes's defence of absolutism — passive obedience — was secular and rationalistic rather than theological. He regarded the happiness of the community (as a whole) as the great end of government.

Hobbes' philosophy is cynical. According to him a man's impulses are naturally directed to his own preservation and pleasure and he cannot aim at anything but their gratification. Therefore a man is unsociable by nature! He says "in the natural state every man is at war with his fellows, and the life of every one is 'in danger, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short.'" It is the fear of this sordid life that impel them to Political Union. Since mere pact would do, hence the establishment of 'a supreme common power the Govt,"

[Man an unsociable Animal!]

[Perpetual danger forces them to form State!]

Society is founded by "acquisition" i.e. by conquest, or "institution" viz; by mutual contract or compact. In the latter case, once the sovereign authority is established all must obey. Any body rebelling must perish. He should be destroyed.

['Conquest' or "acquisition" and "Institution" the only basis of all States]

He gives the rights of legislature, judicature and Executive — one and all to the Sovereign. 'To be effective', he writes, 'the sovereign power must be unlimited, inalienable and indivisible. Unlimited power may indeed give rise to mischief, but the worst of these is not to be laid as Civil war or anarchy.

[Unlimited Authority of the Sovereign!]

Unlimited Authority of the Sovereign!

He gives the rights of Legislature, Judicature and Executive—one and all to the sovereign. To be effective, he writes, 'the sovereign power must be unlimited, irreclaimable and indivisible. Unlimited power may indeed give rise to mischief, but the worst of these is not so bad as civil war or anarchism[160]

PAGE 174

In his opinion, monarchy aristocracy or democracy do not differ in their power. Their achievement towards general plan and security rests on the obedience of the public or people they command. Anyhow he *prefers 'Monarchy'*! 'Limited Monarchy' is the best in his opinion. But he prefers [?] that the sovereing must regulate ecclesiastical as well as civil affairs and determine what doctrines are conducive to peace.

Thus he holds a clear and valid doctrine of sovereignity, while retaining the fiction of a social contract to generate the King or Sovereign.

Spinoza (1677)[161]

'Unsociability of man!'

In his work *Tractatus Politicus*, 1677, regarded men as originally having equal rights over all things; hence the state of nature was a *State of War*. Men, led by their reasons, freely combined their forces to establish Civil Government. As man had absolute power, hence the *Sovereign authority* thus estabished had the absolute power. In his opinion, 'Right' and 'Power' are identical. Hence the sovereign being rested with the 'power' had all the 'rights' ipso facto. Hence he favours 'absolutism'.

Puffendorf[162]

'Law of Nature and Nations' 1672. In his opinion man is a sociable animal, naturally inclined towards family and peaceful life.

Experience of injuries that one man can inflict on another leads upto

160 Page 173 ends here. Page 174 has a line on top, totally illegible, which is presumably a continuation of this line.

161 Benedictus de Spinoza or Baruch de Spinoza (1632–1677), Dutch philosopher of Jewish origin, one of the great rationalists of 17th-century philosophy and, by virtue of his magnum opus *Ethics*, one of the definitive ethicists. Considered to have laid the groundwork for the 18th-century Enlightenment.

162 Baron Samuel von Pufendorf (1632–1694), German jurist, political philosopher, economist, statesman, and historian. Wrote commentaries and revisions of the theories of Thomas Hobbes and Hugo Grotius. Bhagat Singh mis-spells his name, with 'ff'.

Civil Government, which is constituted (1): by a unanimous mutual covenant of a number of men to institute a Comman Wealth, (2) by the resolution of the majority that certain ruler shall be placed in authority, (3) by a covenant between the Government and the subjects that the former shall rule and the latter shall obey *lawful commands!*

PAGE 175

Locke

Two Treatises of Civil Government–1690

"No man has a natural right to govern."

He portrays the state of nature—a state of freedom and equality in respect of jurisdiction and dominion, limited only by natural law or reason, which prohibits men from harming one another in life, health, liberty and possessions, the punishment requisite by way of restraint or reparation being in everyman's hands.

State of Nature

"Men living together according to reason without a common superior on earth with authority to judge between them is properly the State of Nature!"

Private Property

"Every man has a natural right of property in his own person and in the product of his own labour exercised on the material of nature. As much land as a man tills, plants, improves, cultivates, and can use the product of, so much is his property.

Property and Civil Society

According to him "*property*" is antecedent to "*civil society*"!

Origin of Civil Society

But it appears men were in some sort of dangers and fears, and therefore, they renounced their *natural liberty* in favour of *civil liberty*. In short, *necessity, convenience, and inclination urged men into society*.

Definition of Civil Society

Those who are united into one body, and have a common established Law and judicature to appeal to, with authority to decide controversies between them and punish offenders, are in a civil society.

Consent

Conquest is not an 'original' of government. Consent was, and could be the sole origin of any lawful government.

The legislature assembly is not absolutely arbitrary over the lives, liberties and property of the people, for it possesses only the joint power which the separate members had prior to the formation of the Society, and which they resigned to it for particular and limited purposes.

Law

"The end of Law is not the abolish or restrain but to preserve or enlarge freedom."

Legislative

The legislative being only a fiduciary power for certain ends, the people may remove or alter it, when it violates the trust reposed in it.

Ultimate Sovereignty of the People!

Thus the community always retains the supreme power or ultimate sovereignty, but does not assume it until the government is dissolved.

PAGE 176

Legislative and Executive

To prevent the sacrifice of the general welfare to private interests, it is expendient that the *legislative* and *executive* powers should be in different hands, latter being subordinate to the former.

Where both powers are vested in an absolute monarch, there is no civil government, for there is no common judge with authority between him and his subjects.

The forms of different commonwealths in free societies are Democracy, oligarchy, or elective Monarchies together with mixed forms.

'Right of Revolution'!

"A Revolution is justifiable when the government ceases to fulfil its part of contract—the protection of personal rights."

Rousseau[163]

163 The following are Bhagat Singh's notes from Rousseau's *Social Contract*.

Equality

No one should be rich enough to buy another nor poor enough to be forced to sell himself. Great inequalities pave the way for tyranny.

Property and Civil Society

The first man who, having enclosed a piece of land, thought of saying 'this is mine,' and found people simple enough, to believe him, was the true founder of Civil Society.

What wars, crimes, and horrors would have been spared to the race, if some one had exposed this imposture, and declared *that the earth belonged to no one, & its fruits to all.*

PAGE 177

"The man who meditates is a depraved animal"

Civil Law

Pointing to the oppression of the weak and the insecurity of all, the rich craftily devised rules of justice and peace, by which all should be guaranteed their possessions, and established a Supreme ruler to enforce the Laws.

This must have been the origin of Society and of the Laws, which gave new chains to the weak and new strength to the rich, finally destroyed natural liberty, and, for the profit of a few ambitious men, fixed for ever the law of property and of inequality, *converted a clever usurpation into an irrevocable right*, and subjected the whole human race hence-forward to labour, servitude and misery.

Re: Inequalities

But it is manifestly opposed to natural law that a handful of people should gorge superfluities while the famished multitude lack the necessities of life.

PAGE 178

Fate of his Writings

Emile and Social Contract, both published in 1762, the former burnt in Paris, Rousseau narrowly escaping arrest, then both being publically burnt in Genoa, his native place whence he expected greater response.

Sovereignty of Monarch to that of the People

Rousseau retains the French ideas of unity and centralisation; but while in the seventeenth century, the State (or sovereignty) was confounded with the

monarchy. Rousseau's influence caused it in the 18th Century to be identified with the people.

Pact

By pact men exchange natural liberty for civil liberty and moral liberty.

Right of First Occupancy

Right of Property:

Its justification depends on these conditions: (a) that the land is uninhabited; (b) that a man occupies only the area required for his subsistence; (c) that he takes possession of it not by an empty ceremonial, but by labour and cultivation.

PAGE 179

Religion

Rousseau places even religion under the tyranny of the sovereign.

Introductory Note

I wish to enquire whether, taking men as they are and laws as they can be made, it is possible to establish some just and certain rule of administration in civil affairs . . .

. . . I shall be asked whether I am a prince or a legislator that I write on politics. I reply that I am not. If I were one, I should not waste time in saying what ought to be done; I should do it or remain silent."

Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains.

Shaking off the Yoke of Slavery by Force

I should say that so long as a people is compelled to obey and does obey, it does well; but that, so soon as it can shake off the yoke and does shake it off, it does better; for, if men recover their freedom by virtue of the same right (i.e. force) by which it was taken away, either they are justified in resuming it, or there was no justification for depriving them of it.

PAGE 180

Force

"Power which is acquired by violence is only a usurpation, and lasts only so long as the force of him who commands prevails over that of those who obey; so that if the latter become the strongest in their turn and shake off the yoke, they do so with as much right and justice as the other who had imposed it on

them. The same law (of force) which has made the authority, then unmakes it; it is the law of the strongest."

Diderot, Encyclopaedia[164]
"Authority"

Slaves lose everything in their bonds, even the desire to escape from them;[165]

The Right of the Strongest

"Obey the powers that be. If that means, yield to force, the precept is good but superfluous; I reply that it will never be violated.[166]

Right of Slavery

'Do subjects, then, give up their persons on condition that their property also shall be taken? I do not see what is left for them?'

'It will be said that the despot secures to his subjects civil peace. Be it so; but what do they gain by that, if the wars which his ambitions bring upon them, together with his insatiable greed and the vexations of his administration, harrass them more than their own dissensions would?[167]

PAGE 181

To say that a man gives himself for nothing is to say what is absurd and inconvievable."

Whether addressed by a man to a man, or by man to a nation, such a speech as this will always be equally foolish: "I make an agreement with you wholly at your expense and wholly for my benefit, and I shall observe it as long as I please, while you also shall observe it as long as I please."

Equality

If then you wish to give stability to the State, bring the two extremes as near together as possible; tolerate neither rich nor beggars. These two conditions, naturally inseparable, are equally fatal to the general welfare; from the one class spring tyrants, from the other, the supporters of tyranny; it is always

164 Denis Diderot (1713–84), French philosopher and Chief Editor of *Encyclopedie*. He also wrote the first French 'bourgeois' drama, *Le Neveu de Rameau*. He was anti-clerical and was imprisoned because of his works like *Lettres sur les Aveugeles* (1749).

165 Rousseau, *Social Contract*, chapter 2, 'The First Societies'.

166 Rousseau, *Social Contract*, chapter 3, 'The Right of the Strongest'.

167 Rousseau, *Social Contract*, chapter 4, 'Slavery'.

between these that the traffic in public liberty is carried on; the one buys the other sells.

PAGE 182

"Hail lays waste a few cantons, but it rarely causes scarcity. Riots and civil wars greatly startle the chief men; but they do not produce the real misfortunes of nations, which may be abated, while it is being disputed who shall tyrannise over them. It is from their permanent conditions that their real prosperity or calamities spring; when all is left crushed under the yoke, it is then that everything perishes; it is then that the chief men, destroying them at their leisure, "Where they make a solitude, they call it peace."

pp 176

PAGE 183

French Revolution[168]

America

American war of Independence had great effect on the French situation (1776).

Taxes

Court or ministry acting under the use of the name 'The King', framed the edicts of taxes at their own discretion and sent them to the Parliament to be registered; for until they were registered by the Parliament, they were not operative.[169]

The court insisted that the Parliament's authority went no further than to show reasons against it, reserving to itself the right of determining whether the reasons were well or ill founded and, in consequence thereof, either to withdraw the edict as a matter of choice, or to *order* it to be enregistered as a matter of authority.

The Parliament, on the other hand, insisted for having the right of rejection.

168 It is not clear which book, if any, on the French Revolution had reached Bhagat Singh's hands. It is however apparent from his notes that he was more interested in the conflict between the authority of the King or the old regime on one hand and the new 'popular' forces which appeared on the scene to challenge that authority. Also, Bhagat Singh did not seem to have much time at his disposal for a more serious or indepth study of all the events. His notes seem to be cursory but factual. Perhaps he was conscious that time was running out.

169 *Parlement* was a body of the King's counselors, not an elected body as today. Under pressure from the nobles and in a mood of appeasement, King Louis XVI had restored the 'dormant' parlement in 1776.

M. Calonne[170] the minister wanted money. He was aware of the sturdy disposition of the Parliament with respect to taxes. He called an "*Assembly of Notables*" (1787).

It was not a *States-General* which was elected, but all the members were nominated by the King and consisted of *141 members*. Even then he could not get the majority support. He divided it into *7 committees*. Every committee consisting of *20 members*. Every question was to be decided by majority votes in committees and by majority committee votes in Assembly. He tried to have 11 members whom he could trust in each of/any four committees, thus to have a majority. But his devices failed.

PAGE 184

M. de Lafayatte[171] was Vice-President of a second committee. He charged M. Calonne for having sold crown land to the amount of two millions of livers. He gave it in writing too. Sometimes afterwards, *M. Calonne* was dismissed.

[170] Charles Alexandre de Calonne (1734–1802), French statesman, who became controller-general of finance (1783). The State coffers being empty, he sought to raise loans but Parlement resisted. He then proposed to the King to suppress internal customs and duties, and tax notables and the clergy. An 'Assembly of Notables' was called in January 1787, but his proposal to curtail their privileges was opposed. He was dismissed, and went to England in exile. Allowed to return to Paris in 1802, he died soon after.

[171] Marie-Joseph-Paul-Yves-Roch-Gilbert Du Motier, Marquis de La Fayette (or Lafayette) (1757–1834), French aristocrat and military officer. La Fayette is considered a national hero in both France and the United States for his participation in the American and French revolutions. At the age of 19, while serving as a captain, he was captivated by the news of the revolt of American colonies against the English. Thus began his adventure. A personal friend of George Washington, he was instrumental in bringing France on the American side which provoked England to declare war against France. He took his seat in the 'Assembly of Notables' in 1787, and demanded that the King convene the States-General. He was elected to it and in 1789, presented a declaration of rights on the model of the 1776 American Declaration of Rights. In 1790, he was promoted as colonel-general in the new National Guard of Paris, and played an active part in the early rounds of the Revolution until 1792, when he was declared a traitor by the Assembly for espousing the cause of constitutional monarchy. In exile, he was held a prisoner of state for five years in Prussian and Austrian prisons. Released on the intervention of Napoleon Bonaparte, he returned to France in 1799. Soon he was to vote against Napoleon being made a Consul for life (1802) and then his assumption of the imperial title (1804). He lived in retirement during the First Empire, but returned to public affairs during the Restoration. He was a Deputy of the Assembly for many years until his death, holding temporary command of the National Guard during the 1830 Revolution.

The Archbishop of Tolouse[172] was appointed the Prime Minister and Finance Minister. He placed before the Parliament two taxes—Stamp Tax and a sort of land-tax. The Parliament returned for answer,

> That with such a revenue as the nation then supported, the name of taxes ought not to be mentioned but for the purpose of reducing them

and threw both the edicts out. Then they were ordered to Versailles, where the King held, 'A Bed of Justice' and enregistered those edicts. Parliament returned to Paris. Held a session there. Ordered the enregistration to be struck off. Declaring everything done at Versailles to be illegal. All were served with 'letter de cachets' and exiled. And afterwards they were recalled. Again the same edicts were placed before them.

PAGE 185

Then arose the question of calling a States-General. The King promised with the Parliament. But ministry opposed. They put forth a new proposal for the formation of a 'Full Court'. It was opposed on two grounds: Firstly, for principle's sake, Govt. had no right to change itself. Such a precedent will be harmful. Secondly, on the question of form; it was contended that it was nothing but an enlarged Cabinet.

The Parliament rejected this proposal. It was beseiged by armed forces. For many days, they were there. Still they persisted. Then many of them were arrested and sent to different jails.

A deputation from Brittany came to remonstrate against it. They were sent to Bastille.

'Assembly of Notables' again recalled, decided to follow the same course as adopted in 1614 to call States General.

"Parliament decided that 1200 members should be elected, 600 from commons, 300 from clergy and 300 from nobility.

States General[173] met in May 1789. Nobility and clergy went to two different chambers.

172 Etienne Charles de Lomienie de Brienne, archbishop of Tolouse, succeeded Calonne to the Treasury in 1787. His proposal to the parlement, modelled on those by Calonne to extend the stamp duty and levy a general land-tax were refused, and referred to the States-General.

173 States-General met in May 1789, after a long gap of nearly 175 years (since after 1614). King Louis XVI was compelled to call the representives of the nobility, the clergy and the bourgeoisie because of the bankruptcy of his treasury. About 300

PAGE 186

The third estate or the Commons refused to recognise this right of the clergy and nobility and declared themselves to be the 'Representatives of the Nation' denying the others any right whatsoever in any other capacity than the national representatives sitting alongwith them in the same chamber. Hence the States General became the 'National Assembly'. They sent invitations to other chamber. Majority of Clergy came over to them. 45 of the aristocracy also joined them; then their number increased to eighty and afterwards still higher.[174]

PAGE 187

Tennis Court Oath

The malcontents of Nobility and Clergy wanted to overthrow the National Assembly. They conspired with ministry. The door of the chamber was shut in the face of the Representatives of the Nation and were guarded by militia. They then proceeded to a tennis court in a body, and took an oath never to separate until they had established a constitution.

Bastille

The next day the chamber was again thrown open to them. But secretly thirty thousand troops were mobilised to beseige Paris. The unarmed Parisian Mob attacked Bastille; and Bastille was taken.
14th July 1789

Versailles

5th October 1789—Thousands of men and women proceeded towards Versailles to demand satisfaction from 'Garde du Corps' for their insolent behaviour in connection with national cockade. It is known as Versailles expedition. As a result of further developments, the King was brought to Paris.

---

members each of the first two ranks and twice the number of the third category attended. It soon became the epicentre of a new kind of political struggle, popular representatives grabbing the initiative and then setting the course of future events. The storming of the Bastille, the much-hated symbol of tyranny and oppression, on July 14, was one such expression of the people's mood, as was the march of Paris citizens on Versailles and the enforced return of the King and his retinue as their hostages.

174 As these extracts show, Bhagat Singh was keenly interested in how the people's representatives came to influence the course of the Revolution.

PAGE 188

The wisdom of every country when properly exerted, is sufficient for all its purposes.

pp. 112
Rs of man[175]

That the form of a government was a matter wholly at the will of a nation at all times, that if it chose a monarchical form, it had a right to have it so; and if it afterwards chose to be a Republican, it had a right to be a republic: and to say to a king, "we have no longer any occasion for you."

House of Lords. Minister Earl of Shelburne[176]

PAGE 189

King:

If there existed a man so transcendently wise above all others, that his wisdom was necessary to instruct a nation, some reason might be offered for monarchy; but when we cast our eyes about a country and observe how every part understands its own affairs; and when we look around the world and see that, of all men in it, the race of kings are the most insignificant in capacity, our reason fails to ask us—What are these men kept for?[177]

Libeller

"If to expose the fraud and imposition of monarchy and every species of hereditary government to lessen the oppression of taxes—to propose plans for the education of helpless infancy, and the comfortable support of the aged and distressed—to endeavour to conciliate nations to each other—to extirpate the horrid practice of war—to promote universal peace, civilisation and commerce—and to break the chains of political superstition, and raise degraded man to his proper rank—if these things be libellous, let me live the life of a libeller, and let the name of "Libeller" be engraven on my tomb." [178]

xi

175 This, and the following quotes, are from *The Rights of Man* by Thomas Paine.
176 It is hard to say why this name is written here, since the preceding quote is from Paine.
177 From *The Rights of Man* by Thomas Paine.
178 From Thomas Paine.

PAGE 190

But when principle and not place, is the energetic cause of action, a man, I find, is everywhere the same.

Death

If we were immortal we should all be miserable; no doubt it is hard to die, but is sweet to think that we shall not live for ever.

pp. 45, Emile[179]

Socialistic Order

"From each according to his ability, to each according to his need."

Audacity is the soul of success in Revolution.

"Action, Action. Power first discussion afterwards," said Danton[180]

PAGE 191

Russian Experiment[181]

1917–27

The philosophy of the Bolsheviks is utterly, aggressively materialistic, whose one redeeming feature even their bitterest enemies will have to recognise, viz. the utter absence of any illusion.

179 *Emile* by Rousseau.

180 George Jacques Danton (1759–94), French revolutionary, drawn to liberal, republican ideas after he came to Paris (1780) to study law. He became a powerful orator and one of the leaders of the radical Cordeliers group during the early phases of the Revolution. He helped organise the overthrow of the monarchy (1792); became head of the Provisional Government, and set up the Committee of Public Safety (1793) which became an instrument of 'revolutionary terror'. Ultimately, losing in struggle of power with Robespierre, he met his end under the guillotine. Maxmilien Francois Marie Isidore de Robespierre (1758–94) was a Jacobin leader in the Revolution and member of the Public Safety Committee which perpetrated its Reign of Terror (1793–94). After ousting rivals like Danton, Robespierre could exercise his dictatorial powers for a while through the Revolutionary Tribunal; but was overthrown by the Convention and himself met the fate of his rivals.

181 'Russian Experiment': it is unclear if this refers to a book or not. Some books are listed on this page. It is not certain how much time he got to read these. At any rate, the notes are now somewhat less detailed.

They held firmly to the faith of their founder that "Everything can be explained by natural laws or, in a narrower sense, by Physiology!"

p. 30[182]

1. Face and Mind of Bolshevism by Rene Fulop-Miller[183]
2. Russia by Makeev-O'Hara
3. Russian Revolution by Lancelot Lawton (Macmillan)[184]
4. Bolshevist Russia by Anton Karlgreen[185]
5. Literature and Revolution—Trotsky
6. Marx-Lenin and Science of Revolution by Anton Karlgreen[186]

"Philosophers," said Marx, "have merely interpreted the world in many ways; the really important thing is to change it."

PAGE 192

Religion and Socialism

"Religion is an opium for mankind" said Marx.

"All idealistic considerations lead in the end to a kind of conception of Divinity, and are, therefore, pure non-sense in the eyes of Marxists. Even Hegel saw in God the concrete form of everything good and reasonable that rules the world; the idealist theory must put everything on the shoulders of this unfortunate grey beard, who, according to the teachings of his worshippers, is perfect, and who, in addition to Adam, created fleas and harlots, murderers and lepers, hunger and misery, plague and vodka, in order to punish the sinners whom he himself had created, and who sin in accordance with his will . . . From the scientific standpoint, this theory leads to absurdity. The only scientific explanation of all the phenomenon of the world is supplied by absolute materialism.

(p. 32) Bukharin[187]

182 Source of this quotation unclear.
183 Subtitle: 'An Examination of Cultural Life in Soviet Russia', published in 1927. Fulop-Miller's dates are 1891–1963.
184 Subtitle: '1917–1926', published in 1927.
185 Translated from Swedish by Anna Barwell, published in 1927. Karlgreen's dates are 1882–1973.
186 Further details not available.
187 Bukharin, quoted by Rene Fulop-Miller, *The Mind and Face of Bolshevism*, p. 53.

According to them,

In the beginning, Nature; from it, life; and from life, thought and all the manifestations we call mental or moral phenomenon. There is no such thing as Soul, and Mind is nothing but a function of matter, organised in a particular way.

33[188]

PAGE 193

Marx on Insurrection

Firstly: "Never play with insurrection, if there is no determination to drive it to the bitter end (literally—to face all the consequence of this play) An insurrection is an equation with very indefinite magnitudes, the value of which may change every day. The forces to be opposed have all the advantages of organisation, discipline and traditional authority.

"If the rebels cannot bring great forces to bear against their antagonists, they will be smashed and destroyed.

Secondly: "The insurrection once started, it is necessary to act with the utmost determination and pass over to the offensive. The defensive is the death of every armed rising; it perishes before it has measured forces with the enemy. The antagonists must be surprised while their soldiers are still scattered, and new successes, however small, must be attained daily; the moral ascendancy given by the first success, must be kept up. One must rally to the side of insurrection the vacillating elements, which always follow the stronger, and which always look out for the safer side . . . In one word, act according to the words of Danton—the greatest master of Revolutionary policy yet known—Audacity. . . audacity. . . and yet again audacity!"[189]

PAGE 273[190]

". . . Do you want an expansion of the Legislative Councils? Do you want that a few Indians shall sit as your representatives in the House of Commons?

188 Source unclear.

189 It is uclear why Bhagat Singh attributes both the above quotes to Marx. They are from Frederick Engels, *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Germany*, 1852. Earlier editions of the Notebook have attributed the latter quote to Bukharin.

190 Pages 194 to 272 are blank; the next page in the Notebook is 273. It is possible—though of course not certain—that Bhagat Singh had apportioned different sections or parts of the Notebook, with gaps in between, to note different aspects or extracts of his wide range of study and other occasional jottings. In the section just finished, from page nos 165 to 193, the main focus relates to his (projected) study of the Science of State—the twin concepts of liberty and sovereignty and their evolution. What follows mostly relates to the contemporary Indian situation.

Do you want a large number of Indians in the Civil Service? Let us see whether 50, 100, 200 or 300 civilians will make the government our own . . . The whole Civil Service might be Indian, but the civil servants have to carry out orders—they cannot direct, they cannot dictate the policy. One swallow does not make the summer. One civilian, 100 or 1000 civilians in the service of the British Government will not make the government Indian. There are traditions, there are laws, there are policies to which every civilian, be he black or brown or white, must submit; and as long as these traditions have not been altered, as long as these principles have not been amended, as long as that policy has not been radically changed, the supplanting of Europeans by Indian agency will not make for self-government in this country . . .

If the Government were to come and tell me today. "Take Swaraj", I would say thank you for the gift, but I will not have that which I cannot acquire by my own hand . . .

We shall in the imperative compel the submission to our will of any power that may set itself against us.

. . . The Primary thing is the prestige of the Government.

PAGE 274

Is really self-government within the Empire a practicable ideal? What would it mean? It would mean either no real self-government for us, or no real over-lordship for England. Would we be satisfied with the shadow of self-government? If not, would England be satisfied with the shadow of over-lordship? In either case, England would not be satisfied with a shadowy, over-lordship, and we refuse to be satisfied with a shadowy self-government. And, therefore, no compromise is possible under such conditions between self-government in India and the over-lordship of England . . . If self-government—(real)—is conceded to us, what would be England's position not only in India, but in British Empire itself? Self-government means the right of self-taxation; it means the right of self-control; it means the right of the people to impose protective and prohibitive tariffs on foreign imports. The moment we have the right of self-taxation, what shall we do? We shall not try to be engaged in this uphill work of industrial boycott. But we shall do what every nation has done. Under the circumstances in which we live now, we shall impose a heavy, prohibitive, protective tariff upon every inch of textile fabric from Manchester, upon every blade of knife that comes from Leeds We shall refuse to grant admittance to a British soul into our territory. We would not allow British capital to be engaged in the development of Indian resources, as it is

now engaged. We would not grant any right to the British capitalists to dig up the mineral wealth of the land and to carry it to their own isles. We shall want foreign capital. But we shall apply for foreign loans in the open markets of the whole world, guaranteeing the credit of the Indian Government, the Indian Nation, for the repayment of the loan. . . And England's commercial interests would not be furthered in the way these are being furthered now, under the condition of

PAGE 275

popular self-government, though it might be within the Empire. But what would it mean within the Empire? It would mean that England would have to enter into some arrangements with us for some preferential tariff. England would have to come to our markets on the conditions that we would impose upon her for the purpose, if she wanted an open door in India; and after a while, when we have developed our resources a little and organised our industrial life, we would want the open door not only to England, but to every part of British Empire. And do you think, it is possible for a small country like England with a handful of population, although she might be enormously wealthy, to compete on fair and equitable terms with a mighty continent like India with immense natural resources, with her teeming population, the soberest and abstemious population known to any part of the world?

If we have really self-government within the Empire, if 300 millions of people have that freedom of the Empire, the Empire would cease to be British. It would be the Indian Empire. . .

Bep. Ch. Pal in[191]
New Spirit 1907

191 Bipin Chandra Pal (1858–1932), first came to the forefront in the Swadeshi and boycott campaigns in Bengal and outside, in the wake of the popular upsurge against the Partition of Bengal (1905). Became identified with the "extremist" trio—of Pal, Bal and Lal—within the Congress. A journalist of repute, he was the editor of *New India* (1901) and *Bande Matram* (1906); also edited *Swaraj* from London for some time. In 1920, he became editor of Motilal Nehru's newspaper, *The Independent*. His writings include: *The National Congress* (Lahore 1887), *New Spirit* (1907), *Nationality and Empire* (Calcutta 1916), *Why I Advocate Home Rule for India?* (Adyar 1918), and *Memories of My Life and Times* (Reprinted, Calcutta, 1973).

PAGE 276

Hindu Civilisation

It may seem to us to present in many of its aspects an almost unthinkable combination of spiritualistic idealism and of gross materialism, of asceticism and of sensuousness, of overweening arrogance when it identifies the human self with the universal self and merges man in the Divinity and the Divinity in man, and of demoralising pessimism when it preaches that life itself is but a painful allusion and that the sovereign remedy and end of all evils is non-existence.

Chirol. 26 p.[192]
Indian Unrest

Education Policy

The main original object of the introduction of Western Education into India was the training of a sufficient number of young Indians to fill the sub-ordinate posts in the public offices with English-speaking natives.

p. 34[193]

PAGE 277

How many of the Western educated Indians who have thrown themselves into political agitation against the tyranny of the British bureaucracy have ever raised a finger to free their own fellow countrymen from the tyranny of those social evils? How many of them are entirely free from it themselves, or, if free, have the courage to act up to their opinion?

India Old & New p. 107[194]

PAGE 278

No Indian Parliament Conceivable!

The Indian National Congress assumed unto itself, almost from the beginning, the function of a Parliament. There was and is no room for a Parliament in India, because, so long as British rule remains a reality, the Government of

192 Sir Valentine Chirol (1858–1929), journalist and author of *Indian Unrest* and *India Old and New*. Was in charge of the *Times* foreign Department from 1890 to 1912, beside being a member of the Indian Public Service Commission (1912–1914). Visited India 17 times.

193 Valentine Chirol, *Indian Unrest*.

194 Valentine Chirol, *India Old and New*.

India, as Lord Mosley has plainly stated, must be an autocracy—benevolent and full of sympathy with Indian ideas, but still an autocracy.

154 Unrest[195]

Aim or Goal of the Congress

"The objects of the Indian National Congress are the attainment by the people of India of a system of government similar to that enjoyed by the self-government members of the British Empire and a participation by them in the rights and responsibilities of the Empire on equal terms."

Malviyaji from the Chair in 1909
Lahore Session of the Congress

PAGE 279

Re. Constitution of Free India[196]

No one but the voice of the Mother herself will and can determine when once she comes to herself and stands free what constitution shall be adopted by Her for the guidance of Her life after the revolution is over . . . Without going into detail we may mention this much, that whether the head of the Imperial Government of the Indian Nation be a President or a King depends upon how the revolution develops itself . . . The mother must be free, must be one and united, must make her will supreme. Then it may be that she gives out this Her will either wearing a kingly crown on her head or a Republican mantle round her sacred form.

Forget not, O Princes! that a strict account will be asked of your doings and non-doings, and a people newly born will not fail to pay in the coin you paid. Everyone who shall have actively betrayed the trust of the people, disowned his fathers, and debases his blood by arraying himself against the Mother—he shall be crushed to dust and ashes . . . Do you doubt our grim earnestness? If so, hear the name of Dhingra[197] and be dumb. In the name of

195 Valentine Chirol, *Indian Unrest.* This book is referred to again and again by Bhagat Singh, from page 273/130 onwards.

196 From a leaflet then in circulation—"Choose, O Indian Princes"—a "characteristic document" sent by the "extremists" to the rulers of the Native States. One chief gave it to Chirol who has given two extracts from it on pages 196–197 of his book, with his interlinking comments.

197 Madanlal Dhingra (1887–1909), a young revolutionary with the Indian Home Rule Society and the India House Centre, and associate of Shyamji Krishnavarma, Lala Hardayal, and V.D. Savarkar. On July 1, 1909, Dhingra shot dead Sir Curzon Wylie at a function at the Imperial Institute in London "in humble protest against the inhuman transportation and hangings of Indian youth." Dhingra was hanged.

that martyr, O Indian princes, we ask you to think solemnly and deeply upon these words. Choose as you will and you will reap what you sow. Choose whether you shall be the first of the nation's fathers or the last of nation's tyrants.

p. 196 Indian Unrest
"Choose O Princes"

Untouchables[198]

From the political point of view the conversion of so many millions of the population of India to the faith of their rulers would open the prospects of such moments that I need not expatiate upon them.

P. 184

PAGE 280

Hatyanoy Jagna[199]

Tempted by gold, some native devils in form of men, the disgrace of India—the police—arrested those great men Birendra Ghose[200] and others who worked for the freedom of their country by sacrificing their interests and dedicating their lives in the performance of the sacred ceremony of 'Jagna', preparing bombs. The greatest of these devils in human form, Ashutosh Bishwas[201] began to pave for these heroes the way to the gallows. Bravo Charu! (the murderer of Biswas)[202] all honour to your parents. To glorify them, to show the highest degree of courage, disregarding the paltry short span of life, you

198 These are the concluding comments Valentine Chirol, in context of whether the British should take in hand "the elevation of the depressed castes. . .".

199 'Not Murder but Sacrifice'. This long extract is from Chirol's *Indian Unrest*, pp. 341–342, and is a reproduction of an appeal that was issued in Calcutta. This refers to some incidents of violence, bomb explosions and attacks on (or attempts on the life of) government dignitaries, police officers and informers. Among other things, four attempts had been made on the life of the Lt. Governor of Bengal (as mentioned by Chirol).

200 Bindra (Barendra) Ghose was involved and convicted in the Alipore Conspiracy Case (May 1909). Younger brother of Aurobindo, he was a leader of the Maniktala group of revolutionaries active during the Swadeshi movement, with their periodical *Yugantar* exhorting the youth to action.

201 Chirol: 'on February 10 1909, Mr. Ashutosh Biswas the Public Prosecutor and a Hindu of high character and position, was shot dead outside the Alipur Police Court . . .".

202 Charu Chandra Guha, a daring teenager (handicapped from birth, without his right palm and fingers) shot prosecutor Bishwas dead from close range, because, as Charu later confessed, "he was an enemy of the country." Charu was hanged in the Alipore Central Jail on March 10, 1909.

removed the figure of that monster from the world. Not long ago, the Whites, by force and trick, filched India from Indians.[203] That mean wretch Shamas-ul-Alam[204] who espoused the cause of Alamgir Padsha, who put a stain on the name of his forefathers for the sake of gold—today you have removed that fiend from the sacred soil of India. From Nuren Gossain[205] to Talit Chakravarti, all turned approvers through the machinations of that fiendish wizard Shamas-ul-Alam and by his torture. Had you not removed that ally of monsters, could there be any hope for India?

Many have raised the cry that to rebel is a great sin. But what is rebellion? Is there anything in India to rebel against? Can a Feeing bee be recognised as the King of India, whose very touch, whose mere shadow compels Hindus to purify themselves?

These are merely Western Robbers looting India . . Extirpate them, ye good sons of India! where ever you find them, without mercy, and with them their spies and secret agents. Last year, 19 lakhs of men died of fever, small pox, cholera, plague and other diseases in Bengal alone. Think yourself fortunate that you were not counted amongst those, but remember that plague and cholera may attack you tomorrow, and is it not better for you to die as heroes?

PAGE 282

When God has so ordained, think you not that at this auspicious moment, it is the duty of every good son of India to slay these white enemies? Do not allow yourselves to die of plague and cholera, thus polluting the sacred soil of the Mother India. Our Shastras are our guide for discriminating between virtue and vice. Our Shastras repeatedly tell us that the killing of these white fiends and of their aiders and abettors is equal to a great ceremonial sacrifice (Aswamedh Yagna). Come, one and all! Let us offer our sacrifice before the alter in chorus, and pray that in this ceremony all white serpents may perish

203 Chirol's original has 'the Mohammedans'.

204 In the words of Chirol, Shemas-ul-Alam was "a Mohammedan Inspector of the Criminal Investigation Department in the High Court itself of Calcutta" who was gunned down on January 24, 1910, by young Birendra Nath Datta, a 19 year-old who was caught and executed on February 21, 1910.

205 Narendranath Gosain had turned approver in the Bomb Case following an attack aimed at Mr. Kingsford, the Magistrate of Muzaffarpur, when Mrs and Miss Kennedy fell victims (April 30, 1908). Young Khudiram Bose had then made a brave confession and paid for his deed with his life, and became a popular hero and martyr. Naren Gossain or Narendranath Gossain was shot dead by two co-accused Anailal Datta and Satyendranath Bose on August 31, 1908.

in its flames as the vipers perished in the serpents slaying ceremony of Jamajay-Yagna. Keep in mind that it is not murder but Jagna—a sacrificial rite.

p. 342, Notes
I. U.[206]

"Total electors in India 62,00,000 viz. 2-3/4% of the total population throughout India under direct British administration, excluding the areas to which the 1919 Act was not to be applied."

194. I.O.N.[207]

PAGE 283

India Old and New: Chirol V.
"The British people will have to beware that if they do not want to do justice, it will be the bounden duty of every Indian to destroy the Empire."

Mahatmaji (Nagpur Congress)
191

Rural and Urban Question

Some official ingenuity had been displayed in grouping remote towns together without any regard for geography, in order to prevent townsmen undesirably addicted to advanced political view from standing as candidates for the rural constituencies in which many of the smaller towns would otherwise have been naturally merged. This was a last effort based on the old belief that the population of the Punjab could be divided into goats and sheep, the goats being the 'disloyal' townsmen and the sheep being the 'loyal' peasantry.[208]

Khalsa College was opened in 1892

PAGE 284

India as I Knew it![209]

Truly the path of a 'Mahatma' is difficult, and it is not surprising that Gandhi has recently tried to repudiate the title—and its responsibilities. His influence

206 Valentine Chirol, *Indian Unrest.*
207 Valentine Chirol, *India Old and New.*
208 Valentine Chirol, *India Old and New.*
209 Sir Michael O'Dwyer, *India as I Knew it: 1885–1923*, (London, Macmilan 1925/28). O'Dwyer was Lt. Governor, Punjab, during the years of the First World War, when he mobilised 'support' for the war effort and recruited soldiers from Punjab

in India is steadily waning, but his ascetic pose and the vague impracticable Tolstoyan theories which he so skilfully enunciates as great moral truths, seem to have deluded many well-meaning but weak-minded people in sentimental England and some even in logical France, who are on the look out for a new light from the East.

P. 65.

Informer[210]

The failure of the authorities in that case to conceal and protect the informer (or James Carey who betrayed the Invincible gang of the revolutionaries and due to whose evidence Brady, Fitzherbert and Mullen were hanged for the Phoenix Park double[211] murder, i.e. of Chief and Under-Secretaries. The informer was shot dead on board at Durban by a young revolutionary, O'Donnell) even though his assassin was brought to justice, was I believe, one of chief reasons why the supply of that *contemptible but useful class*, previously so common in Irish Conspiracies, ran dry at the source. As Licut. Governor of Punjab, before and during the Great War, I had to deal with many revolutionary conspiracies, in unravelling which the genus informer played a considerable role, and our precautions were so thorough that not in a single case did an informer come to any injury.

PAGE 285

One can imagine how thoroughly the Indian conspirator, with his low cunning, abnormal vanity, inborn aptitude for intrigue, and capacity for glossing over unpleasant facts, was at home in this atmosphere.

P. 187

India as I Knew It

---

through often coercive methods, and who was also there when the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre took place. He was known and disliked for his 'Jabardust' or strong and imperious ways. Even a moderate leader like Annie Besant was forced to condemn (in 1912) the "harsh and oppressive rule of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, his press-gang methods of recruitment, his forced war-loans and his cruel persecution of all political leaders". His book was a justification or vindication of his conduct and of other authorities or British rulers.

210 In this extract, O'Dwyer drew attention to a parallel situation from the annals of the Irish revolutionary movement, and to his own role in dealing with Punjab revolutionaries.

211 Phoenix Park Murders and their references relate to the well-known activities of the Irish Revolutionaries. The brave and daring deed of Patrick Donnell who had shot dead James Carey, the approver in Phoenix Park murders, case was much admired in India end emulated by young Bengali revolutionaries.

Arya Samaj

In fact the Arya Samaj is a nationalist revival against Western influence; it urges its followers in the Satyarth Prakash, the authoritative work of Dayanand, who was the founder of the sect, to go back to the Vedas, and to seek the golden future in the imaginary golden past of the Aryas. The Satyarth Prakash also contains arguments against non-Hindu rule, and a leading organ of the sect, a few years ago, claimed Dayanand as the real author of the doctrine of Swaraj.

However, the Arya Samaj in 1907, thought it wise to publish a resolution to the effect that as mischievous people here and there spread rumours hostile to them, the organisation in reiterating its old creed, declared that it had no connection of any kind with any political body or with any political agitation in any shape. While accepting this declaration as disassociating the Samaj *as a body* from extremist politics, it should be noted in fairness to the orthodox Hindus that while the Samaj does not include perhaps more than 5% of the Hindu population of the Punjab, an enormous proportion of the Hindus convicted of sedition and other political offences from 1907 down to the present day are members of the Samaj.

P. 184 Ibid

PAGE 286

Statistical Figures About India

In England and Wales 4/5 of people live in towns.

Standard of urban life begins when 1000 people live together. Only then Municipal drainage, lighting and water supply can be organised	India (British) Out of total 244000,000, 226000,000 live in villages.

England—In normal times gives

to Industry	58% of people to Industry
	8% to Agriculture
India gives	71% to Agriculture
	12% to Industry
	5% to Trade
	2% to Domestic Service
	1 ½% to independent Professions
	1 ½ % to Govt. Service, including Army.

In whole of India, 226 millions out of 315 millions are supported by soil.
208 millions out of them live or depend directly upon agriculture.

Montford Report[212]

PAGE 287

Total area—1,800,000 square miles
20 times of Great Britain
700,000 square miles, or more than 1/3, are under States' control. Indian States are 600 in number.
Burma is greater than France.
Madras and Bombay are greater than Italy separately.

Total population of India (1921 census)—318,942,000
i.e. l/5th of the whole human race.
247,000,000 are in British India and 71,900,000 in States.

2 1/2 million persons were literate in English.—16 in every thousand males and 2 in every thousand females.
Total Number of *vernaculars is* 222
Total Number of *villages 500,000.*

PAGE 288

Suez Canal Opened in 1869
Total Export of India at that time was:
Rs. 80 crores = £ 80,000,000
1926–27 and preceding two years, the average was:
Rs. 350 crores i.e. about £ 262,500,000
Total population = 319 millions, out of which 32 ½ million i.e. 10.2% live in towns and cities (urban) while in England the percentage is 79%

212 Montford Report of 1918 on Indian constitutional reforms, by Secretary of State Montague, and Governor-General Chelmsford. Shortly after Edwin Montague, a former Under-secretary of State for India, had made a scathing criticism of the system of Government in India in 1917, he was appointed the Secretary of State. In that capacity, Montague made his historic announcement (on 20 August, 1917) about "increasing the association of Indians in every branch of administration" with a view to "progressive realisation of Responsible Government in India". See also *An Indian Diary* by E.S. Montague (Hienemann, London, 1930). Many of the following figures are also from this Report.

And the most difficult part of the task will be to instil into the minds of the slum dwellers themselves the desire for something better.

pp. 22
Simon Report[213]

PAGE 304[214]

Initials of Bhagat Singh
Dated: 12.9.1929

213 *Simon Report: Report of the Indian Statutory Commission* (London, 1930). The Commission was set up on November 8, 1927 by the British Cabinet to enquire into the working of the 1919 Reforms under a provision of the Government of India Act, 1919. The seven-member Commission had no Indian representative, and this led to widespread protests wherever the Commission went. The Commission's arrival in Bombay on February 3, 1928 was greeted with a country-wide hartal; and the tempo of protests was kept up throughout its visit.

214 There is no entry from pages 289 to 303. The last page of the Notebook has Bhagat Singh's initials with this date (as did the first page) by way of acknowledging the receipt of the notebook. The number of pages mentioned on the top (first page) is 404. Here we have only 304 pages, as numbered with a rubber stamp, of which Bhagat Singh used a total of 145. We do not know what happened to the remaining 100 pages.

AND OTHER

WRITINGS

Statement Before the Session Court

Crown versus Bhagat Singh & B.K. Dutta.
Charge. S.S. 307 I.P.C. & 3 & 4 Explosive Substances Act.

The written statement of accused Bhagat Singh & B.K. Dutta.[1]

1. We stand charged with certain serious offences and at this stage we must explain our conduct. The following questions arise:

(1) Were the bombs thrown into the Assembly Chamber and if so why?
(2) Is the charge as framed by the Lower Court correct or otherwise?

2. To the first half of first question our reply is in the affirmative, but since some of the so-called "eye witnesses" have perjured themselves and since we are not denying our liability to the extent and such as it is let our statement about them be judged for what it is worth. By way of illustration we may point out that the evidence of Sergeant Terry regarding the seizure of the pistol from one of us is a deliberate falsehood for neither of us had the pistol at the time we gave ourselves up. Other witnesses who have deposed to having seen bombs thrown by us have not scrupled to tell lies patent on face of them. It has its own moral for those who aim at judicial purity and fair play. At the same time, we acknowledge the fairness of the Public Prosecutor and the judicial attitude of the Court so far.

3. In our reply to the next half of the first question we are constrained to go into some detail to offer a full and frank explanation of our motive and the circumstances leading up to what has now become an historic event. When we are told by some of the Police Officers who visited us in jail that Lord Irwin in his address to the joint session of the two houses after the event in question described it as an attack directed against no individual but against the institution itself, we readily recognized that the true significance of the

[1] Large portions of the Statement were expunged from the record on June 9, 1929, because they were deemed "irrelevant". These portions have been enclosed within square brackets here. The text of the Statement published here is the same as the original statement signed by Bhagat Singh and Batu Keshwar Dutta preserved in the National Archives of India, New Delhi (accession no. 246, Crown vs. Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutta). Many of the previously published versions of the Statement differ from this text. Why these variations have come into being is unclear.

incident had been correctly appreciated. We are next to none in our love for humanity and so far from having any malice against any individual we hold human life sacred beyond words. We are neither perpetrators of dastardly outrages and therefore a disgrace to the country [as the pseudo-socialist Diwan Chaman Lal is reported to have described us;] nor are we 'lunatics' [as The Tribune of Lahore and some others would have it believed]. We humbly claim to be no more than serious students of the history and conditions of our country and human aspirations, and we despise hypocrisy. [Our practical protest was against the institution which since its birth has eminently helped to display not only its worthlessness but its far-reaching power for mischief. The more we have pondered the more deeply we have been convinced that it exists only to demonstrate to the world India's humiliation and helplessness and it symbolizes the overriding domination of an irresponsible and autocratic rule. Time and again the National Demand has been pressed by the people's representatives only to find the waste-paper basket as its final destination. Solemn resolutions passed by the House have been contemptuously trampled under foot on the floor of the so called Indian Parliament. Resolutions regarding the repeal of repressive and arbitrary measures have been treated with sublime contempt, and Government's measures and proposals rejected as unacceptable by the elected members have been restored by a mere stroke of the pen. In brief, inspite of earnest endevour we have utterly failed to find any justification for the existence of an institution which despite all the pomp and splendour organized with the hard-earned money of the sweating millions of India is only a hollow show and a mischievous make-believe. And like have we failed to comprehend the mentality of the public leaders who help to squander public time and money on such a manifestly stage-managed an exhibition of India's helpless subjection.] We have been ruminating upon all this, as also upon the wholesale arrest of the leaders of the labour movement, when the introduction of the Trade Disputes' bill brought us into the Assembly to watch its progress [and the course of the debate only served to confirm our conviction that the labouring millions of India had nothing to expect from an institution that stood as a menacing monument to the strangling power of Exploiters and the serfdom of the helpless labourers. Finally the insult of what we consider an inhuman and barbarous measure was hurled on the devoted heads of the representative of the entire country and the starving and struggling millions were deprived of their primary right and the sole means of improving their economic welfare. None who has left like us for the dumb-driven drudges of labourers could possibly witness this spectacle with equanimity. None whose heart bleeds for those who have given their life-blood in silence to the building

up of the economic structure of the Exploiters, of whom the Government happens to be the biggest in this country could repress the cry of soul-agonizing anguish which so ruthless a blow wrung out of our hearts.] Consequently [bearing in mind the words of the late Mr. S.R. Das, once the Law Member of the Governor-General's Executive Council, which appeared in the famous letter he had addressed to his son, to the effect that a bomb was necessary to awaken England from her dreams,] we dropped the bombs on the floor of the Assembly Chamber to register our protest on behalf of those who had no other means left to give expression to their heard-rending agony. Our sole purpose was "to make the deaf hear", and to give the heedless a timely warning. [Others have as keenly felt as we have done and from under the seeming stillness of the sea of Indian humanity a veritable storm is about to break out.] We have only hoisted the "danger-signal" to warn those who are speeding along without heeding the grave danger ahead. [We have only marked the end of an era of Utopian non-violence of whose futility the rising generation has been convinced beyond the shadow of doubt. Out of our sincerest good-will to and love of humanity have we adopted this method of warning to prevent the untold suffering which we like millions of others clearly foresee.

4. We have used the expression Utopian non-violence in the foregoing para, which requires some explanation.] Force when aggressively applied is "violence" and is therefore morally unjustifiable; but when it is used in the furtherance of a legitimate cause it has its moral justification. [The elimination of force at all costs is utopian and the new movement which has arisen in the country, and of which we have given the warning, is inspired by the ideals which guided Guru Gobind Singh & Shivaji, Kamal Pasha & Riza Khan, Washington & Garibaldi, Lafayette & Lenin. As both the alien Government and the Indian public leaders appeared to have shut their eyes and closed their ears against the existence and the voice of this movement,] we felt it our duty to sound the warning where it could not go unheard.

5. We have so far dealt with the motive behind the incident in question, and now we must define the extent of our intention.

It cannot be gainsaid that we bore no personal grudge or malice against any one of those who received slight injuries or against any other person in the Assembly. On the contrary we repeat that we hold human life sacred beyond words and would sooner lay down our own lives in the service of humanity than injure any one else. [Unlike the mercenary soldiers of Imperialist Armies who are disciplined to kill without compunction,] we respect and in so

far as it lies in us attempt to save human life. And still we admit having deliberately thrown the bombs into the Assembly Chamber! Facts, however, speak for themselves and our intention should be judged from the result of our action without drawing upon hypothetical circumstances and presumptions. Despite the evidence of the Government Expert the bombs that were thrown in the Assembly Chamber resulted in some damage to furniture and a few slight abrasions in less than half a dozen cases. While the Government's Scientist ascribed this result to a miracle, we see nothing but a precisely scientific process in it all. First the two bombs exploded in vacant spaces within wooden barriers of desks and benches. Secondly even those were within 2 feet of the explosion (for instance Mr. P.R. Rau, Mr. Shanker Rao and Sir George Schuster) were either not hurt or only slightly scratched. Bombs of the capacity deposed to by the Government Expert (though his estimate being imaginary is exaggerated) loaded with an effective charge of Pt. Chlorate and a sensitive Picrate would have smashed the barriers and laid many low within some yards of the explosion. Again had they been loaded with some other high explosive with a charge of destructive pellets or darts they would have sufficed to wipe out a majority of the Members of the Legislative Assembly. Still again we could have flung them into the official box which was chokfull of people of note. And finally we could have ambushed Sir John Simon whose luckless commission was loathed by all the responsible people and who was sitting in the President's gallery at the time. All this, however, was beyond our intention and the bombs did no more than they were designed to do and the miracle consisted in no more than the deliberate aim which landed them in safe places. Similarly the pistol was fired in the air but by neither of us.

6. We then deliberately offered ourselves to bear the penalty for what we had done, [and to let the Imperialist exploiters know that by crushing individuals they cannot kill ideas. By crushing two insignificant units the nation cannot be crushed. We wanted to emphasize the historical lesson that *letters de Cachets* and *Bastilles* could not crush the Revolutionary movement in France. Gallows and the Siberian Mines could not extinguish the Russian revolution. The Bloody Sundays and Black and Tans failed to strangle the movement of Irish freedom. Can ordinances and Safety Bills snuff out the flame of freedom in India! Conspiracy cases trumped up or discovered and incarceration of all youngmen who cherish the vision of a great ideal cannot check the march of Revolution. But timely warning if not unheeded can help to prevent loss of life and general sufferings.] We took it upon ourselves to provide warning and our duty is done.

[7. I, Bhagat Singh, was asked in the Lower Court as to what we meant by the word 'Revolution'. In answer to the question, I would say that Revolution does not necessarily involve sanguinary strife, nor is there any place in it for individual vendetta. It is not the cult of the bomb and the pistol. By Revolution we mean that the present order of things which is based on manifest injustice must change. The producers or the labourers, inspite of being the most necessary element of society are robbed by their exploiters of the fruits of their labour and deprived of their elementary right. On the one hand the peasant who grows corn for all starves with his family; the weaver who supplies the world market with textile fabrics cannot find enough to cover his own and his children's bodies; the masons, the smiths and the carpenters who rear magnificent palaces live and perish in slums; and on the other hand the capitalist exploiters, the parasites of Society squander millions on their whims. These terrible inequalities, and forced disparity of chances are heading towards chaos. This state of affairs cannot last long; and it is obvious that the present order of Society is merry-making is on the brink of a volcano and the innocent children of the Exploiters no less than millions of the exploited are walking on the edge of a dangerous precipice. The whole edifice of this civilization, if not saved in time, shall crumble. A radical change, therefore, is necessary; and it is the duty of those who realize this to reorganize Society on the Socialistic basis. Unless this thing is done and the exploitation of man by man and nations by nations, which goes masquerading as Imperialism, is brought to an end, the sufferings and carnage with which humanity is threatened today cannot be prevented and all talks of ending war and ushering in an era of universal peace is undisguised hypocrisy. By Revolution we mean the ultimate establishment of an order of society which may not be threatened by such a break-down, and in which the sovereignty of the proletariat should be recognized, and as the result of which a world-federation should redeem humanity from the bondage of capitalism and the misery of imperial wars.

8. This is our ideal; and with this ideology for our inspiration we have given a fair and loud enough warning. If, however, it goes unheeded and the present system of Government continues to be an impediment in the way of the natural forces that are welling up, a grim struggle must ensue involving the overthrow of all obstacles, and the establishment of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat to pave the way for the consummation of the ideal of the Revolution.

Revolution is the inalienable right of mankind. Freedom is the imprescriptable birth-right of all. The labourer is the real sustainer of Society. The Sovereignty of the people is the ultimate destiny of the workers.

For these ideals, and for this faith, we shall welcome any suffering to which we may be condemned. To the altar of this revolution we have brought our youth as incense; for no sacrifice is too great for so magnificent a cause.

We are content; we await the advent of the Revolution:

"Long live the Revolution."]

Bhagat Singh
Batu Keshwar Dutta

To Make the Deaf Hear

Hindustan Socialist Republican Association

Notice[1]

"IT TAKES A LOUD VOICE TO MAKE A DEAF HEAR." With these immortal words uttered on a similar occasion by Valliant, a French anarchist martyr, do we strongly justify this action of ours.

Without repeating the humiliating history of the past ten years of the working of the reforms and without mentioning the insults hurled down on the head of the Indian nation through this House, the so-called Indian Parliament, we see that this time again, while the people, expecting some more crumbs of reforms from the Simon Commission, are ever quarelling over the distribution of the expected bones, the Govt. is thrusting upon us new repressive measures like those of the Public Safety and Trades Disputes Bills, while reserving the Press Sedition Bill for the next Session. The indiscriminate arrests of labour leaders working in the open field clearly indicate whither the wind blows.

In these extremely provocative circumstances the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association, in all seriousness, realising the full responsibility, had decided and ordered its army to do this particular action so that a stop be put to this humiliating farce and to let the alien bureaucratic exploiters do what they wish but to make them come before the public eye in their naked form.

Let the representatives of the people return to their constituencies and prepare the masses for the coming revolution. And let the Govt. know that, while protesting against the Public Safety and the Trades Disputes Bills and the callous murder of Lala Lajpat Rai on behalf of the helpless Indian masses, we want to emphasise the lesson often repeated by the history that it is easy to kill the individuals, but you cannot kill the ideas. Great empires crumbled but

[1] Text of the typed leaflet thrown in the Central Assembly by Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutta after they exploded the bombs. Shiv Verma, Bhagat Singh's comrade and editor of Selected Writings of Shaheed Bhagat Singh, recalls that this was written by Bhagat Singh in their Sitaram Bazar den. He also typed out about 30 to 40 copies of it on the party letterhead. Jaidev Kapoor helped make arrangements for the typing. A full-size block of the leaflet was publishes in *The Hindustan Times* in its special evening edition the same day, April 8, 1929.

the ideas survived. Bourbons and Czars fell while the revolution marched ahead triumphantly.

We are sorry to admit that we who attach so great a sanctity to human life, we who dream of a glorious future when man will be enjoying perfect peace and full liberty, have been forced to shed human blood. But the sacrifice of the individuals at the altar of the great revolution that will bring freedom to all rendering the exploitation of man by man impossible, is inevitable.

Long Live Revolution!

Sd- Balaraj
Commander-in-Chief

Message to Punjab Students' Conference

Comrades[1]

Today, we cannot ask the youth to take to pistols and bombs. Today, students are confronted with a far more important assignment. In the coming Lahore Session the Congress is to give call for a fierce fight for the independence of the country. The youth will have to bear a great burden in this difficult times in the history of the nation. It is true that students have faced death at the forward positions of the struggle for independence. Will they hesitate this time in proving their same staunchness and self-confidence? The youth will have to spread this revolutionary message to the far corners of the country. They have to awaken crores of slum-dwellers of the industrial areas and villagers living in worn-out cottages, so that we will be independent and the exploitation of man by man will become an impossibility. Punjab is considered politically bockward even otherwise. This is also the responsibility of the youth. Taking inspiration from the martyr Yatindra Nath Das and with boundless reverence for the country, they must prove that they can fight with steadfast resolve in this struggle for independence.

[1] The Second Punjab Students' Conference was held at Lahore on October 19, 1929, under the presidentship of Subhash Chandra Bose, and this message was read in the open session. Bhagat Singh signed this message jointly with B.K. Dutta. Shiv Verma recalls that the message was received with "a thunderous applause" and "slogans of Bhagat Singh Zindabad!"

On the Slogan "Long Live Revolution"

The Editor
Modern Review[1]

You have, in the December (1929) issue of your esteemed magazine, written a note under the caption "Long Live Revolution", and have pointed out the meaninglessness of this phrase. It would be impertinent on our part to try to refute or contradict the statement of such an old, experienced and renowned journalist as your noble self, for whom every enlightened Indian has profound admiration. Still we feel it our duty to explain what we desire to convey by the said phrase, as in a way it fell to our lot to give these "cries" a publicity in this country at this stage.

We are not the originators of this cry. The same cry had been used in Russian revolutionary movements. Upton Sinclair, the well-known socialist writer, has, in his recent novels *Boston* and *Oil*, used this cry through some of the anarchist revolutionary characters. The phrase never means that the sanguinary strife should ever continue, or that nothing should ever be stationary even for a short while. By long usage this cry achieves a significance which may not be quite justifiable from the grammatical or the etymological point of view, but nevertheless we cannot abstract from that the association of ideas connected with that. All such shouts denote a general sense which is partly acquired and partly inherent in them. For instance, when we shout "Long Live Jatin Das", we cannot and do not mean thereby that Das should physically be alive. What we mean by that shout is that the noble ideal of his life, the indomitable spirit which enabled that great martyr to bear such untold suffering and to make the extreme sacrifice for that ideal, should ever live. By raising this cry we wish that we may show the same unfailing courage in persuance of our ideal. It is that spirit that we allude to.

Similarly, one should not interpret the word "Revolution" in its literal sense. Various meanings and significances are attributed to this word, according to the interests of those who use or misuse it. For the established agencies of exploitation it conjures up a feeling of blood-stained horror. To the revolutionaries it is a sacred phrase. We tried to clear in our statement before

[1] The editor of *Modern Review*, Ramanand Chatterji, ridiculed the slogan "Long Live Revolution" because, according to him, it meant the endless perpetuation of strife. Bhagat Singh handed his reply to the trying magistrate, to be sent to *Modern Review*. The reply was subsequently published in the *Tribune* on December 24, 1929.

the Sessions Judge, Delhi, in our trial in the Assembly Bomb Case, what we mean by the word "Revolution".

We stated therein that Revolution did not necessarily involve sanguinary strife. It was not a cult of bomb and pistol. They may sometimes be mere means for its achievement. No doubt they play a prominent part in some movements, but they do not—for that very reason —become one and the same thing. A rebellion is not a revolution. It may ultimately lead to that end.

The sense in which the word Revolution is used in that phrase, is the spirit, the longing for a change for the better. The people generally get accustomed to the established order of things and begin to tremble at the very idea of a change. It is this lethargical spirit that needs be replaced by the revolutionary spirit. Otherwise degeneration gains the upper hand and the whole humanity is led astray by the reactionary forces. Such a state of affairs leads to stagnation and paralysis in human progress. The spirit of Revolution should always permeate the soul of humanity, so that the reactionary forces may not accumulate (strength) to check its eternal onward march. Old order should change, always and ever, yielding place to new, so that one "good" order may not corrupt the world. It is in this sense that we raise the shout "Long Live Revolution".

Yours sincerely
Bhagat Singh
B.K. Dutta

Regarding Suicide

Letter to Sukhdev

Dear brother,[1]

I have gone through your letter attentively and many times. I realise that the changed situation has affected us differently. The things you hated outside have now become essential to you. In the same way, the things I used to support strongly are of no significance to me any more. For example, I believed in personal love, but now this feeling has ceased to occupy any particular position in my heart and mind. While outside, you were strongly opposed to it but now a drastic change and radicalisation is apparent in your ideas about it. You experience it as an extremely essential part of human existence and you have found a particular kind of happiness in the experience.

You may still recollect that one day I had discussed suicide with you. That time I told you that in some situations suicide may be justifiable, but you contested my point. I vividly remember the time and place of our conversation. We talked about this in the Shahanshahi Kutia one evening. You said in jest that such a cowardly act can never be justified. You said that acts of this kind were horrible and heinous, but I see that you have now made an about-turn on this subject. Now you find it not only proper in certain situations but also necessary, even essential. My opinion is what you had held earlier, that suicide is a heinous crime. It is an act of complete cowardice. Leave alone revolutionaries, no individual can ever justify such an act.

You say you fail to understand how suffering alone can serve the country. Such a question from a person like you is really perplexing, because how much thoughtfully we loved the motto of the Naujawan Bharat Sabha—"to suffer and sacrifice through service". I believe that you served as much as was possible. Now is the time when you should suffer for what you did. Another

[1] Shiv Verma, Bhagat Singh's comrade, annotates this letter as follows: "Hearing of the case was over. Judgement was expected any day. Sukhdev expected life transportation for him. To him the idea of remaining in jail for 20 years was repulsive. He wrote to Bhagat Singh that in case he (Sukhdev) is convicted for life he will commit suicide. He stood for release or death; no middle course.

"Bhagat Singh's reaction to Sukhdev's letter was very sharp. Serve, suffer and live to struggle for the cause—that was his stand. 'Escaping from hardships is cowardice', he said. This letter provides one more window to peep into the martyr's mind." Translated from Hindi.

point is that this is exactly the moment when you have to lead the entire people.

Man acts only when he is sure of the justness of his action, as we threw the bomb in the Legislative Assembly. After the action, it is the time for bearing the consequences of that act. Do you think that had we tried to avoid the punishment by pleading for mercy, we would have been more justified? No, this would have had an adverse effect on the masses. We are now quite successful in our endeavour.

At the time of our imprisonment, the condition for the political prisoners of our party were very miserable. We tried to improve that. I tell you quite seriously that we believed we would die very shortly. Neither we were aware of the technique of forced feeding nor did we ever think of it. We were ready to die. Do you mean to say that we were intending to commit suicide? No. Striving and sacrificing one's life for a superior ideal can never be called suicide. We are envious of the death of our Comrade Yatindra Nath Das. Will you call it suicide? Ultimately, our sufferings bore fruit. A big movement started in the whole of the country. We were successful in our aim. Death in the struggles of this kind is an ideal death.

Apart from this, the comrades among us, who believe that they will be awarded death, should await that day patiently when the sentence will be announced and they will be hanged. This death will also be beautiful, but committing suicide—to cut short the life just to avoid some pain—is cowardice. I want to tell you that obstacles make a man perfect. Neither you nor I, rather none of us, have suffered any pain so far. That part of our life has started only now.

You will recollect that we have talked several times about realism in the Russian literature, which is nowhere visible in our own. We highly appreciate the situations of pain in their stories, but we do not feel that spirit of suffering within ourselves. We also admire their passion and the extraordinary height of their characters, but we never bother to find out the reason. I will say that only the reference to their resolve to bear pain has produced the intensity, the suffering of pain, and this has given great depth and height to their characters and literature. We become pitiable and ridiculous when we imbibe an unreasoned mysticism in our life without any natural or substantial basis. People like us, who are proud to be revolutionary in every sense, should always be prepared to bear all the difficulties, anxieties, pain and suffering which we invite upon ourselves by the struggles initiated by us and for which we call ourselves revolutionary.

I want to tell you that in jail, and in jail alone, can a person get an

occasion to study empirically the great social subjects of crime and sin. I have read some literature on this and only the jail is the proper place for the self-study on all these topics. The best parts of the self-study for one is to suffer oneself.

You know it that the suffering of political prisoners in the jails of Russia caused, in the main, the revolution in the prison-administration after the overthrow of Czardom. Is India not in need of such persons who are fully aware of this problem and have personal experience of these things? It will not suffice to say that "someone else would do it, or that many other people are there to do it. Thus, men who find it quite dishonourable and hateful to leave the revolutionary responsibilities to others should start their struggle against the existing system with total devotion. They should violate these rules but they should also keep in mind the propriety, because unnecessary and improper attempts can never be considered just. Such agitations will shorten the process of revolution. All the arguments which you gave to keep yourself aloof from all such movements, are incomprehensible to me. Some of our friends are either fools or ignorant. They find your behaviour quite strange and incomprehensible. (They themselves say they cannot comprehend it because you are above and very far from their understanding.)

In fact, if you feel that jail life is really humiliating, why don't you try to improve it by agitating? Perhaps, you will say that this struggle would be futile, but this is precisely the argument which is usually used as a cover by weak people to avoid participation in every movement. This is the reply which we kept on hearing outside the jail from the people who were anxious to escape from getting entangled in revolutionary movements. Shall I now hear the same argument from you? What could our party of a handful of people do in comparison to the vastness of its aims and ideals? Shall we infer from this that we erred gravely in starting our work altogether? No, inferences of this kind will be improper. This only shows the inner weakness of the man who thinks like this.

You write further that it cannot be expected of a man that he will have the same thinking after going through 14 long years of suffering in the prison, which he had before, because the jail life will crush all his ideas. May I ask you whether the situation outside the jail was any bit more favourable to our ideas? Even then, could we have left it because of our failures? Do you mean to imply that had we not entered the field, no revolutionary work would have taken place at all? If this be your contention, then you are mistaken, though it is right that we also proved helpful to an extent in changing the environment. But, then, we are only a product of the need of our times.

I shall even say that Marx—the father of communism—did not actually originate this idea. The Industrial Revolution of Europe itself produced men of this kind. Marx was one among them. Of course, Marx was also instrumental to an extent in gearing up the wheels of his time in a particular way.

I (and you too) did not give birth to the ideas of socialism and communism in this country; this is the consequence of the effects of our time and situations upon ourselves. Of course, we did a bit to propagate these ideas, and therefore I say that since we have already taken a tough task upon ourselves, we should continue to advance it. The people will not be guided by our committing suicides to escape the difficulties; on the contrary, this will be quite a reactionary step.

We continued our work despite the testing environment of disappointments, pressures and violence ordained by the Jail rules. While we worked, we were made target of many kinds of difficulties. Even men who were proud to proclaim themselves to be great revolutionaries, deserted us. Were these conditions not testing in the extreme? Then, what was the reason and the logic of continuing our agitation and efforts?

Does this simple argument not by itself give added strength to our ideas? And, don't we have instances of our revolutionary comrades who suffered for their convictions in jails and are still working on return from jails? Had Bakunin argued like you he would have committed suicide right in the beginning. Today, you find many revolutionaries occupying responsible posts in the Russian state who had passed the greater part of their lives in prison, completing their sentences. Man must try hard to stick to his beliefs. No one can say what future has in store.

Do you remember that when we were discussing that some concentrated and effective poison should also be kept in our bomb factories, you opposed it very vehemently. The very idea was repugnant to you. You had no faith in it. So, what has happened now? Here, even the difficult and complex condition's do not obtain. I feel revulsion even in discussing this question. You hated even that attitude of mind which permits suicide. You will kindly excuse me for saying that had you acted according to this belief right at the time of your imprisonment (that is, you had committed suicide by taking poison), you would have served the revolutionary cause, but at this moment, even the thought of such an act is harmful to our cause.

There is just one more point which I will like to draw your attention to. We do not believe in God, hell and heaven, punishment and rewards, that is in any Godly accounting of human life. Therefore, we must think of life and death on materialist lines. When I was brought here from Delhi for the purpose

of identification, some intelligence officers talked to me on this topic, in the presence of my father. They said that since I did not try to save my life by divulging secrets, it proved the presence of an acute agony in my life. They argued that a death of this kind will be something like suicide. But I had replied that a man with beliefs and ideals like mine, could never think of dying uselessly. We want to get the maximum value for our lives. We want to serve humanity as much as possible. Particularly a man like me, whose life is nowhere sad or worried, can never think of suicide even, leave alone attempting it. The same thing I want to tell you now.

I hope you will permit me to tell you what I think about myself. I am certain of capital punishment for me. I do not expect even a bit of moderation or amnesty. Even if there is amnesty, it will not be for all, and even that amnesty will be for others only, not for us; it will be extremely restricted and burdened with various conditions. For us, neither there can be any amnesty nor it will ever happen. Even then, I wish that release calls for us should be made collectively and globally. Along with that, I also wish that when the movement reaches its climax, we should be hanged. It is my wish that if at any time any honourable and fair compromise is possible, issues like our case may never obstruct it. When the fate of the country is being decided, the fate of individuals should be forgotten. As revolutionaries, we are fully aware of all the past experiences. Therefore, we do not believe that there can be any sudden change in the attitude of our rulers, particularly in the British race. Such a surprising change is impossible without revolution. A revolution can be achieved only through sustained striving, sufferings and sacrifices. And it shall be achieved. As far as my attitude is concerned, I can welcome facilities and amnesty for all only when its effect is permanent and some indelible impressions are made on the hearts of the people of the country through our hanging. Only this much and nothing more.

Letter to Father

Oct. 4, 1930

My dear Father,[1]

I was astounded to learn that you had submitted a petition to the members of the Special Tribunal in connection with my defence. This intelligence proved to be too severe a blow to be borne with equanimity. It has upset the whole equilibrium of my mind. I have not been able to understand how you could think it proper to submit such a petition at this stage and in these circumstances. Inspite of all the sentiments and feelings of a father, I don't think you were at all entitled to make such a move on my behalf without even consulting me. You know that in the political field my views have always differed with those of yours. I have always been acting independently without having cared for your approval or disapproval.

I hope you can recall to yourself that since the very beginning you have been trying to convince me to fight my case very seriously and to defend myself properly. But you also know that I was always opposed to it. I never had any desire to defend myself and never did I seriously think about it. Whether it was a mere vague ideology or that I had certain arguments to justify my position, is a different question and that cannot be discussed here.

You know that we have been pursuing a definite policy in this trial. Every action of mine ought to have been consistent with that policy, my principle and my programme. At present the circumstances are altogether different, but had the situation been otherwise, even then I would have been the last man to offer defence. I had only one idea before me throughout the trial, i.e. to show complete indifference towards the trial inspite of serious nature of the charges against us. I have always been of opinion that all the political workers should be indifferent and should never bother about the legal fight in the law courts and should boldly bear the heaviest possible sentences inflicted upon them. They may defend themselves but always from purely political considerations and never from a personal point of view. Our policy in this trial has always been consistent with this principle; whether we were successful in that or not is not for me to judge. We have always been doing our duty quite disinterestedly.

[1] When the case was in its final stage, Bhagat Singh's father Sardar Kishan Singh, in a written appeal to the Tribunal, claimed that his son was innocent and had nothing to do with Saunders' murder. He also requested that Bhagat Singh be given an opportunity to prove his innocence. This letter records Bhagat Singh's response to his father.

In the statement accompanying the text of Lahore Conspiracy Case Ordinance the Viceroy had stated that the accused in this case were trying to bring both law and justice into contempt. The situation afforded us an opportunity to show to the public whether we were trying to bring law into contempt or whether others were doing so. People might disagree with us on this point. You might be one of them. But that never meant that such moves should be made on my behalf without my consent or even my knowledge. My life is not so precious, at least to me, as you may probably think it to be. It is not at all worth buying at the cost of my principles. There are other comrades of mine whose case is as serious as that of mine. We had adopted a common policy and we shall stand to the last, no matter how dearly we have to pay individually for it.

Father, I am quite perplexed. I fear I might overlook the ordinary principles of etiquette and my language may become a little but harsh while criticising or rather censoring this move on your part. Let me be candid. I feel as though I have been stabbed at the back. Had any other person done it, I would have considered it to be nothing short of treachery. But in your case, let me say that it has been a weakness—a weakness of the worst type.

This was the time where everybody's mettle was being tested. Let me say, father, you have failed I know you are as sincere a patriot as one can be. I know you have devoted your life to the cause of Indian independence, but why, at this moment, have you displayed such a weakness? I cannot understand.

In the end, I would like to inform you and my other friends; and all the people interested in my case, that I have not approved of your move. I am still not at all in favour of offering any defence. Even if the court had accepted that petition submitted by some of my co-accused regarding defence, etc., I would have not defended myself. My applications submitted to the Tribunal regarding my interview during the hunger strike, were misinterpreted and it was published in the press that I was going to offer defence, though in reality I was never willing to offer any defence. I still hold the same opinion as before. My friends in the Borstal Jail will be taking it as a treachery and betrayal on my part. I shall not even get an opportunity to clear my position before them.

I want that public should know all the details about this complication, and, therefore, I request you to publish this letter.

Your loving son
Bhagat Singh

Letter to B.K. Dutta

Central Jail, Lahore
November, 1930

Dear brother,[1]

The judgement has been delivered. I am condemned to death. In these cells, besides myself, there are many others prisoners who are waiting to be hanged. The only prayer of these people is that somehow or other they may escape the noose. Perhaps I am the only man amongst them who is anxiously waiting for the day when I will be fortunate enough to embrace the gallows for my ideal.

I will climb the gallows gladly and show to the world as to how bravely the revolutionaries can sacrifice themselves for the cause.

I am condemned to death, but you are sentenced to transportation for life. You will live and, while living, you will have to show to the world that the revolutionaries not only die for their ideals but can face every calamity. Death should not be a means to escape the worldly difficulties. Those revolutionaries who have by chance escaped the gallows, should live and show to the world that they cannot only embrace gallows for the ideal but also bear the worst type of tortures in the dark dingy prison cells.

Yours
Bhagat Singh

[1] The original English version appeared in *New Era*, an English weekly from Calcutta (now defunct). The original has not been traced. This version has been re-translated from Hindi.

Letter to Jaidev Gupta

Lahore Central Jail
24.7.30

My dear Jaidev,[1]
Please take following books in my name from Dwarkadas Library and send them through Kulvir on Sunday:

Militarism (Karl Liebknecht)	*Why Men Fight* (B. Russel)
Soviets at Work	*Collapse of the Second International*
Left-Wing Communism	*Mutual Aid* (Prince Kropotkin)
Fields, Factories and Workshops	*Civil War in France* (Marx)
Land Revolution in Russia	*Spy* (Upton Sinclair)

Please send one more book from Punjab Public Library: *Historical Materialism* (Bukharin). Also, please find out from the librarian if some books have been sent to Borstal Jail. They are facing a terrible famine of books. They had sent a list of books through Sukhdev's brother Jaidev. They have not received any book till now. In case they, have no list, then please ask Lala Firoz Chand to send some interesting books of his choice. The books must reach them before I go there on this Sunday. This work is a must. Please keep this in mind.

Also send *Punjab Peasants in Prosperity and Debt* by Darling and 2 or 3 books of this type for Dr. Alam. Hope you will excuse me for this trouble. I promise I will not trouble you in future. Please remember me to all my friends and convey my respect to Lajjawati. I am sure if Dutt's sister came she will not forget to see me.

With regards
Bhagat Singh

[1] Jaidev Gupta was Bhagat Singh's close friend from his school days.

Introduction to *Dreamland*

My noble friend, L. Ram Saran Das,[1] has asked me to write an introduction to his poetical work, 'The Dreamland'. I am neither a poet nor a litterateur, neither am I a journalist nor a critic. Hence, by no stretch of imagination can I find the justification of the demand. But the circumstances in which I am placed do not afford any opportunity of discussing the question with the author arguing back and forth, and thereby do not leave me any alternative but to comply with the desire of my friend.

As I am not a poet I am not going to discuss it from that point of view. I have absolutely no knowledge of metre, and do not even know whether judged from metrical standard it would prove correct. Not being a litterateur I am not going to discuss it with a view of assigning to it its right place in the national literature.

I, being a political worker, can at the utmost discuss it only from that point of view. But here also one factor is making my work practically impossible or at least very difficult. As a rule the introduction is always written by a man who is at one with the author on the contents of the work. But, here the case is quite different. I do not see eye to eye with my friend on all the matters. He was aware of the fact that I differed from him on many vital points. Therefore, my writing is not going to be an introduction at all. It can at the utmost amount to a criticism, and its place will be at the end and not in the beginning of the book.

In the political field 'The Dreamland' occupies a very important place. In the prevailing circumstances it is filling up a very important gap in the movement. As a matter of fact all the political movements of our country that

[1] Shiv Verma's annotation: "Lala Ram Saran Das was convicted for life in 1915 in the first Lahore Conspiracy Case. While in Salem Central Prison, Madras Presidency, he wrote a book in verse entitled *The Dreamland*. After his release in the mid-twenties he contacted Bhagat Singh and Sukhdev and became active in the HSRA. He was arrested again in connection with the second LCC. This time he wavered and accepted king's pardon. Soon he realised the mistake and retracted his statement. He was charged of perjury and convicted for two years which was subsequently reduced to six months in appeal.

"It was during this conviction that he passed on his manuscript to Bhagat Singh for an introduction. In this article Bhagat Singh, while appreciating the spirit behind Ram Saran Das's work, has criticised his Utopian approach to the problems of revolution. He has also expressed himself on such subjects as God, religion, violence and non-violence, spiritualism, literature, poetry, etc."

have hitherto played any important role in our modern history, had been lacking the ideal at the achievement of which they aimed. Revolutionary movement is no exception. In spite of all my efforts, I could not find any revolutionary party that had clear ideas as to what they were fighting for, with the exception of the Ghadar Party which, having been inspired by the USA form of government, clearly stated that they wanted to replace the existing government by a Republican form of government. All other parties consisted of men who had but one idea, i.e., to fight against the alien rulers. That idea is quite laudable but cannot be termed a revolutionary idea. We must make it clear that revolution does not merely mean an upheaval or a sanguinary strife. Revolution necessarily implies the programme of systematic reconstruction of society on new and better adapted basis, after complete destruction of the existing state of affairs (i.e., regime).

In the political field the liberals wanted some reform under the present government, while the extremists demanded a bit more and were prepared to employ radical means for the same purpose. Amongst the revolutionaries, they had always been in favour of extreme methods with one idea, i.e., of overthrowing the foreign domination. No doubt, there had been some who were in favour of extorting some reforms through those means. All these movements cannot rightly be designated as revolutionary movements.

But L. Ram Saran Das is the first revolutionary recruited formally in the Punjab by a Bengali absconder in 1908. Since then he had been in touch with the revolutionary movements and finally joined the Ghadar Party but retaining his old ideas that those people held about the ideal of their movement. It has another interesting fact to add to its beauty and value. L. Ram Saran Das was sentenced to death in 1915, and the sentence was later on commuted to life transportation. Today, sitting in the condemned cells myself, I can let the readers know as authoritatively that the life imprisonment is comparatively a far harder lot than that of death. L. Ram Saran Das had actually to undergo fourteen years of imprisonment. It was in some southern jail that he wrote this poetry. The then psychology and mental struggle of the author has stamped its impressions upon the poetry and makes it all the more beautiful and interesting. He had been struggling hard against some depressing mood before he had decided to write. In the days when many of his comrades had been let off on undertakings and the temptation had been very strong for everyone and for him, too, and when the sweet and painful memories of wife and children had added more to the longing for liberty, be had to struggle hard against the demoralising effect of these things, and had directed attention to this work. Hence, we find the sudden outburst in the opening paragraph:

"Wife, children, friends that me surround
Were poisonous snakes all around."

He discusses philosophy in the beginning. This philosophy is the backbone of all the revolutionary movements of Bengal as well as of the Punjab. I differ from him on this point very widely. His interpretation of the universe is teleological and metaphysical, while I am a materialist and my interpretation of the phenomenon would be causal. Nevertheless, it is by no means out of place or out of date. The general ideas that are prevailing in our country, are more in accordance with those expressed by him. To fight that depressing mood he resorted to prayers as is evident that the whole of the beginning of the book is devoted to God, His praise, His definition. Belief in God is the outcome of mysticism which is the natural consequence of depression. That this world is 'Maya' or 'Mithya', a dream or a fiction, is clear mysticism which has been originated and developed by Hindu sages of old ages, such as Shankaracharya—and others. But in the materialist philosophy this mode of thinking has got absolutely no place. But this mysticism of the author is by no means ignoble or deplorable. It has its own beauty and charm. The ideas are encouraging. Just look:

"Be a foundation-stone obscure,
And on thy breast cheerfully bear
The architecture vast and huge,
In suffering find true refuge.
Envy not the plastered top-stone,
On which all worldly praise is thrown." etc., etc.

From my personal experience I can safely assert that in the secret work, when a man constantly leads a risky life, "without hope and without fear", "always prepared to die unknown, unhonoured and unsung", then, he cannot but fight the personal temptations and desires by this sort of mysticism which is by no means demoralising. The next thing he deals with is the mentality of a revolutionary. L. Ram Saran Das was the member of the revolutionary party which was held responsible for many a violent deed. But this by no means proves that revolutionaries are blood-thirsty monsters, seeking pleasure in destruction. Read:

"If need be, outwardly be wild,
But in thy heart be always mild

Hiss if need be, but do not bite,
Love in thy heart and outside fight," etc., etc.

Destruction is not only essential but indispensable for construction. The revolutionaries have to adopt it as a necessary item of their programme, and the philosophy of violence and non-violence is beautifully described in the above lines. Lenin said to Gorky once that he could not bear music which upset his whole nervous system, and used to feel a desire to pat the heads of the artists. "But", added he, "this is not the time to pat the heads. The hands descend now to smash the skulls, though our ultimate aim is the elimination of all sorts of violence." This is truly how the revolutionaries feel when they have to resort to violent means as a terrible necessity.

Next, the author deals with the problem concerning the various conflicting religions. He tries to conciliate them just as all the nationalists try to do. His method of dealing with the question is lengthy and round about, though on my part I would have dismissed it with one sentence of Karl Marx that "Religion is opium for the masses".

Lastly comes the most important part of his poetry where he deals with the future society which we all long to create. But I like to clear one thing at the very outset. 'The Dreamland' is a veritable Utopia. The author has very candidly admitted it in the title. He does not pretend to have written a scientific thesis on the subject. The title 'Dreamland' makes it clear enough. But Utopias play undoubtedly a very important role in social progress. Without St. Simon, Fourier and Robert Owen and their theories there would have been no scientific Marxian socialism. L. Ram Saran Das's Utopia occupies the same place. When our workers will realise the importance of systematising the philosophy of their movement and of framing a scientific outlook of the movement, then this book will be very useful to them.

I have marked that the mode of expression is crude one. The ideas of the existing society have in no way left him untouched while dealing with his Utopia:

"Giving of alms to those who need."

In the future society, i.e., the communist society that we want to build, we are not going to establish charitable institutions, but there shall be no needy and poor, and no alms-giving and alms-taking. In spite of this discrepancy the question has been dealt with in a very beautiful way.

The general outline discussed by him is very much the same as that of

scientific socialism. But there are things which one has to oppose or contradict or, to be more precise, to amend. For instance, in a footnote under stanza 427, he writes that public servants have to work in farms or, say, factories for four hours daily to earn their living. But this is again Utopian and impracticable. It is rather the outcome of repulsion of the existing order where the public servants are paid unduly very high. As a matter of fact the Bolshevists even had to recognise that mental work also is as productive a labour as the manual labour. And in the future society when the relations of various elements shall be adjusted on the basis of equality, the producers as well as the distributors shall be considered equally important. You cannot expect a sailor to stop his ship and land every twenty-four hours to do his four hours' daily labour to earn his livelihood, or a scientist to leave his laboratory and his experiment (work) to do his quota in the field. Both of them are doing very productive labour. The only difference that the socialist society expects is that the mental workers shall no longer be regarded superior to the manual workers.

L. Ram Saran Das's idea about free education is really worth considering, and the socialist government has adopted somewhat the same course in Russia.

His discussion about crime is really the most advanced school of thought. Crime is the most serious social problem which needs a very tactful treatment. He has been in jail for the better part of his life. He has got the practical experience. At one place he employs the typical jail terms, 'the light labour, the medium labour and the hard labour', etc. Like all other socialists he suggests that, instead of retribution, i.e., retaliation, the reformative theory should form the basis of punishment. Not to punish but to reclaim should be the guiding principle of the administration of justice. Jails should be reformatories and not veritable hells. In this connection the readers should study the Russian prison system.

While dealing with militia he discusses war as well. In my opinion war as an institution shall only occupy a few pages in the Encyclopaedia then, and war materials shall adorn the galleries in the museums, because in that society there shall be no conflicting or diverse interests that cause war.

At the utmost we can say that war shall have to be retained as an institution for the transitional period. We can easily understand if we take the example of the present-day Russia. There is the dictatorship of the proletariat at present. They want to establish a socialist society. Meanwhile they have to maintain an army to defend themselves against the capitalist society. But the war-aims would be different. Imperialist designs shall no more actuate our dreamland people to wage wars. There shall be no more war trophies. The revolutionary armies shall march to other lands not to rule or loot the people, but to pull the

parasitic rulers down from their thrones and stop their blood-sucking exploitation and thus to liberate the toiling masses. But, there shall not be the primitive national or racial hatred to goad our men to fight.

World-federation is the most popular and immediate object of all the free thinking people, and the author has well dilated on the subject, and his criticism of the so-called League of Nations is beautiful.

In a footnote under stanza 571 (572) the author touches, though briefly, the question of methods. He says: "Such a kingdom cannot be brought about by physical violent revolutions. It cannot be forced upon society from without. It must grow from within. . . . This can be brought about by the gradual process of Evolution, by educating the masses on the lines mentioned above", etc. This statement does not in itself contain any discrepancy. It is quite correct, but having not been fully explained, is liable to create some misunderstanding, or worse still, a confusion. Does it mean that L. Ram Saran Das has realised the futility of the cult of force? Has he become an orthodox believer in non-violence? No, it does not mean that.

Let me explain what the above quoted statement amounts to. The revolutionaries know better than anybody else that the socialist society cannot be brought about by violent means, but that it should grow and evolve from within. The author suggests education as the only weapon to be employed. But, everybody can easily realise that the present government here, or, as a matter of fact, all the capitalist governments are not only not going to help any such effort, but on the contrary, suppress it mercilessly. Then, what will his 'evolution' achieve? We the revolutionaries are striving to capture power in our hands and to organise a revolutionary government which should employ all its resources for mass education, as is being done in Russia today. After capturing power, peaceful methods shall be employed for constructive work, force shall be employed to crush the obstacles. If that is what the author means, then we are at one. And I am confidant that it is exactly this what he means.

I have discussed the book at great length. I have rather criticised it. But, I am not going to ask any alteration in it, because this has got its historical value. These were the ideas of 1914–15 revolutionaries.

I strongly recommend this book to young men in particular, but with a warning. Please do not read it to follow blindly and take for granted what is written in it. Read it, criticise it, think over it, try to formulate your own ideas with its help.

To Young Political Workers

To
The Young Political Workers[1]
Dear comrades,

Our movement is passing through a very important phase at present. After a year's fierce struggle some definite proposals regarding the constitutional reforms have been formulated by the Round Table Conference and the Congress leaders have been invited to give this . . .[2] think it desirable in the present circumstances to call off their movement. Whether they decide in favour or against is a matter of little importance to us. The present movement is bound to end in some sort of compromise. The compromise may be effected sooner or later. And compromise is not such ignoble and deplorable a thing as we generally think. It is rather an indispensable factor in the political strategy. Any nation that rises against the oppressors is bound to fail in the beginning, and to gain partial reforms during the medieval period of its struggle through compromises. And it is only at the last stage—having fully organised all the forces and resources of the nation—that it can possibly strike the final blow in which it might succeed to shatter the ruler's government. But even then it might fail, which makes some sort of compromise inevitable. This can be best illustrated by the Russian example.

In 1905 a revolutionary movement broke out in Russia. All the leaders were very hopeful. Lenin had returned from the foreign countries where he had taken refuge. He was conducting the struggle. People came to tell him that a dozen landlords were killed and a score of their mansions were burnt. Lenin responded by telling them to return and to kill twelve hundred landlords and burn as many of their palaces. In his opinion that would have meant something if revolution failed. Duma was introduced. The same Lenin advocated the view of participating in the Duma. This is what happened in 1907. In 1906 he was opposed to the participation in this first Duma which had granted more scope of work than this second one whose rights had been

1 After Bhagat Singh's execution this document was published in a mutilated form. All references to Soviet Union, Marx, Lenin and the Communist Party were carefully deleted. Subsequently, the Government of India published it in one of its secret reports in 1936. A photostat copy of the full report is preserved in the library of the Martyrs' Memorial and Freedom Struggle Research Centre at Lucknow.

2 Missing text.

curtailed. This was due to the changed circumstances. Reaction was gaining the upper hand and Lenin wanted to use the floor of the Duma as a platform to discuss socialist ideas.

Again, after the 1917 revolution, when the Bolsheviks were forced to sign the Brest Litovsk Treaty, everyone except Lenin was opposed to it. But Lenin said: "Peace". "Peace and again peace: peace at any cost—even at the cost of many of the Russian provinces to be yielded to German War Lord". When some anti-Bolshevik people condemned Lenin for this treaty, he declared frankly that the Bolsheviks were not in a position to face the German onslaught and they preferred the treaty to the complete annihilation of the Bolshevik Government.

The thing that I wanted to point out was that compromise is an essential weapon which has to be wielded every now and then as the struggle develops. But the thing that we must keep always before us is the idea of the movement. We must always maintain a clear notion as to the aim for the achievement of which we are fighting. That helps us to verify the success and failures of our movements and we can easily formulate the future programme. Tilak's policy, quite apart from the ideal, i.e. his strategy, was the best. You are fighting to get sixteen annas from your enemy, you get only one anna. Pocket it and fight for the rest. What we note in the moderates is of their ideal. They start to achieve one anna and they can't get it. The revolutionaries must always keep in mind that they are striving for a complete revolution. Complete mastery of power in their hands. Compromises are dreaded because the conservatives try to disband the revolutionary forces after the compromise. But able and bold revolutionary leaders can save the movement from such pitfalls. We must be very careful at such junctures to avoid any sort of confusion of the real issues, especially the goal. The British Labour leaders betrayed their real struggle and have been reduced to mere hypocrite imperialists. In my opinion the diehard conservatives are better to us than these polished imperialist Labour leaders. About the tactics and strategy one should study life-work of Lenin. His definite views on the subject of compromise will be found in *"Left-Wing" Communism.*

I have said that the present movement, i.e., the present struggle, is bound to end in some sort of compromise or complete failure.

I said that, because in my opinion, this time the real revolutionary forces have not been invited into the arena. This is a struggle dependent upon the middle class shopkeepers and a few capitalists. Both these, and particularly the latter, can never dare to risk its property or possessions in any struggle. The real revolutionary armies are in the villages and in factories, the peasantry

and the labourers. But our *bourgeois* leaders do not and cannot dare to tackle them. The sleeping lion once awakened from its slumber shall become irresistible even after the achievement of what our leaders aim at. After his first experience with the Ahmedabad labourers in 1920 Mahatma Gandhi declared: "We must not tamper with the labourers. It is dangerous to make political use of the factory proletariat" (*The Times*, May 1921). Since then, they never dared to approach them. There remains the peasantry. The Bardoli resolution of 1922 clearly defines the horror the leaders felt when they saw the gigantic peasant class rising to shake off not only the domination of an alien nation but also the yoke of the landlords.

It is there that our leaders prefer a surrender to the British than to the peasantry. Leave alone Pt. Jawahar lal. Can you point out any leader who made any effort to organise the peasants or the labourers? No, they will not run the risk. There they lack. That is why I say they never meant a complete revolution. Through economic and administrative pressure they hoped to get a few more reforms, a few more concessions for the Indian capitalists. That is why I say that this movement is doomed to die, may be after some sort of compromise or even without. The young workers who in all sincerity raise the cry "Long Live Revolution," are not well organised and strong enough to carry the movement themselves. As a matter of fact, even our great leaders, with the exception of perhaps Pt. Motilal Nehru, do not dare to take any responsibility on their shoulders, that is why every now and then they surrender unconditionally before Gandhi. In spite of their differences, they never oppose him seriously and the resolutions have to be carried for the Mahatma.

In these circumstances, let me warn the sincere young workers who seriously mean a revolution, that harder times are coming. Let them beware lest they should get confused or disheartened. After the experience made through two struggles of the Great Gandhi, we are in a better position to form a clear idea of our present position and the future programme.

Now allow me to state the case in the simplest manner. You cry "Long Live Revolution." Let me assume that you really mean it. According to our definition of the term, as stated in our statement in the Assembly Bomb Case, revolution means the complete overthrow of the existing social order and its replacement with the socialist order. For that purpose our immediate aim is the achievement of power. As a matter of fact, the state, the government machinery is just a weapon in the hands of the ruling class to further and safeguard its interest. We want to snatch and handle it to utilise it for the consummation of our ideal, i.e., the social reconstruction on new, i.e., Marxist, basis. For this purpose we are fighting to handle the government machinery.

All along we have to educate the masses and to create a favourable atmosphere for our social programme. In the struggles we can best train and educate them.

With these things clear before us, i.e., our immediate and ultimate object having been clearly put, we can now proceed with the examination of the present situation. We must always be very candid and quite business-like while analysing any situation.

We know that since a hue and cry was raised about the Indians' participation in and share in the responsibility of the Indian government, the Minto-Morley Reforms were introduced, which formed the Viceroy's council with consultation rights only. During the Great War, when the Indian help was needed the most, promises about self-government were made and the existing reforms were introduced. Limited legislative powers have been entrusted to the Assembly but subject to the goodwill of the Viceroy. *Now is the third stage.*

Now reforms are being discussed and are to be introduced in the near future. How can our young men judge them? This is a question; I do not know by what standard are the Congress leaders going to judge them. But for us, the revolutionaries, we can have the following criteria:

1. Extent of responsibility transferred to the shoulders of the Indians.
2. Form of the Government institutions that are going to be introduced and the extent of the right of participation given to the masses.
3. Future prospects and the safeguards.

These might require a little further elucidation. In the first place, we can. easily judge the extent of responsibility given to our people by the control our representatives will have on the executive. Up till now, the executive was never made responsible to the Legislative Assembly and the Viceroy had the veto power, which rendered all the efforts of the elected members futile. Thanks to the efforts of the Swaraj Party, the Viceroy was forced every now and then to use these extraordinary powers to shamelessly trample the solemn decisions of the national representatives under foot. It is already too well known to need further discussion.

Now in the first place we must see the method of the executive formation: Whether the executive is to be elected by the members of a popular assembly or is to be imposed from above as before, and further, whether it shall be responsible to the house or shall absolutely affront it as in the past?

As regards the second item, we can judge it through the scope of franchise. The property qualifications making a man eligible to vote should be altogether abolished and universal suffrage be introduced instead. Every adult, both

male and female, should have the right to vote. At present we can simply see how far the franchise has been extended.

As for the form, we have the bicameral government. In my opinion the upper house is much a *bourgeois* superstition or trap. According to me unicameral government is the only best we can expect.

I may here make a mention about provincial autonomy. But from whatever I have heard, I can only say that the Governor imposed from above, equipped with extraordinary powers, higher and above the legislative, shall prove to be no less than a despot. Let us better call it the "provincial tyranny" instead of "autonomy." This is a strange type of democratisation of the state institution.

The third item is quite clear. During the last two years the British politicians have been trying to undo Montague's promise for another dole of reforms to be bestowed every ten years till the British Treasury exhausts.

We can see what they have decided about the future.

Let me make it clear that we do not analyse these things to rejoice over the achievement, but to form a clear idea about our situation, so that we may enlighten the masses and prepare them for further struggle. For us, compromise never means surrender, but a step forward and some rest. That is all and nothing else.

* * *

Having discussed the present situation, let us proceed to discuss the future programme and the line of action we ought to adopt.

As I have already stated, for any revolutionary party a definite programme is very essential. For, you must know that revolution means action. It means a change brought about deliberately by an organised and systematic work, as opposed to sudden and unorganised or spontaneous change or breakdown. And for the formulation of a programme, one must necessarily study:

1. The goal.
2. The premises from where we are to start, i.e., the existing conditions.
3. The course of action, i.e., means and methods.

Unless one has a clear notion about these three factors, one cannot discuss anything about programme.

We have discussed the present situation to some extent. The goal also has been slightly touched. We want a socialist, revolution, the indispensable preliminary to which is the political revolution. That is what we want. The political revolution does not mean the transfer of state (or more crudely, the power) from the hands of the British to the Indians, but to those Indians who

are at one with us as to the final goal, or to be more precise, the power to be transferred to the revolutionary party through popular support. After that, to proceed in right earnest is to organise the reconstruction of the whole society on the socialist basis. If you do not mean this revolution, then please have mercy. Stop shouting "Long Live Revolution." The term revolution is too sacred, at least to us, to be so lightly used or misused. But if you say you are for the national revolution and the aims of your struggle is an Indian republic of the type of the United States of America, then I ask you to please let me know on what forces you rely that will help you bring about that revolution. The only forces on which you can rely to bring about any revolution, whether national or the socialist, are the peasantry and the labour. Congress leaders do not dare to organise those forces. You have seen it in this movement. They know it better than anybody else that without these forces they are absolutely helpless. When they passed the resolution of complete independence—that really meant a revolution—they did not mean it. They had to do it under pressure of the younger element, and then they wanted to use it as a threat to achieve their hearts' desire—Dominion Status. You can easily judge it by studying the resolutions of the last three sessions of the Congress. I mean Madras, Calcutta and Lahore. At Calcutta, they passed a resolution asking for Dominion Status within twelve months, otherwise they would be forced to adopt complete independence as their object, and in all solemnity waited for some such gift till midnight after the 31st December, 1929. Then they found themselves "honour bound" to adopt the Independence resolution, otherwise they did not mean it. But even then Mahatmaji made no secret of the fact that the door (for compromise) was open. That was the real spirit. At the very outset they knew that their movement could not but end in some compromise. It is this half-heartedness that we hate, not the compromise at a particular stage in the struggle. Anyway, we were discussing the forces on which you can depend for a revolution. But if you say that you will approach the peasants and labourers to enlist their active support, let me tell you that they are not going to be fooled by any sentimental talk. They ask you quite candidly: what are they going to gain by your revolution for which you demand their sacrifices, what difference does it make to them whether Lord Reading is the head of the Indian government or Sir Purshotamdas Thakordas? What difference for a peasant if Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru replaces Lord Irwin! It is useless to appeal to his national sentiment. You can't "use" him for your purpose; you shall have to mean seriously and to make him understand that the revolution is going to be his and for his good. The revolution of the proletariat and for the proletariat.

When you have formulated this clear-cut idea about your goals you can proceed in right earnest to organise your forces for such an action. Now there are two different phases through which you shall have to pass. First, the preparation; second, the action.

After the present movement ends, you will find disgust and some disappointment amongst the sincere revolutionary workers. But you need not worry. Leave sentimentalism aside. Be prepared to face the facts. Revolution is a very difficult task. It is beyond the power of any man to make a revolution. Neither can it be brought about on any appointed date. It is brought about by special environments, social and economic. The function of an organised party is to utilise any such opportunity offered by these circumstances. And to prepare the masses and organise the forces for the revolution is a very difficult task. And that requires a very great sacrifice on the part of the revolutionary workers. Let me make it clear that if you are a businessman or an established worldly or family man, please don't play with fire. As a leader you are of no use to the party. We have already very many such leaders who spare some evening hours for delivering speeches. They are useless. We require—to use the term so dear to Lenin—the "professional revolutionaries". The whole-time workers who have no other ambitions or life-work except the revolution. The greater the number of such workers organised into a party, the greater the chances of your success.

To proceed systematically, what you need the most is a party with workers of the type discussed above with clear-cut ideas and keen perception and ability of initiative and quick decisions. The party shall have iron discipline and it need not necessarily be an underground party, rather the contrary. Though the policy of voluntarily going to jail should altogether be abandoned. That will create a number of workers who shall be forced to lead an underground life. They should carry on the work with the same zeal. And it is this group of workers that shall produce worthy leaders for the real opportunity.

The party requires workers which can be recruited only through the youth movement. Hence we find the youth movement as the starting point of our programme. The youth movement should organise study circles, class lectures and publication of leaflets, pamphlets, books and periodicals. This is the best recruiting and training ground for political workers.

Those young men who may have matured their ideas and may find themselves ready to devote their life to the cause, may be transferred to the party. The party workers shall always guide and control the work of the youth movement as well. The party should start with the work of mass propaganda. It is very essential. One of the fundamental causes of the failure

of the efforts of the Ghadar Party (1914–15) was the ignorance, apathy and sometimes active opposition of the masses. And apart from that, it is essential for gaining the active sympathy of and organising the peasants and workers. The name of party or rather,[3] a communist party. This party of political workers, bound by strict discipline, should handle all other movements. It shall have to organise the peasants' and workers' parties, labour unions, and may even venture to capture the Congress and kindred political bodies. And in order to create political consciousness, not only of national politics but class politics as well, the party should organise a big publishing campaign. Subjects on all proletens (!)[4] enlightening the masses of the socialist theory shall be within easy reach and distributed widely. The writings should be simple and clear.

There are certain people in the labour movement who enlist some absurd ideas about the economic liberty of the peasants and workers without political freedom. They are demagogues or muddle-headed people. Such ideas are unimaginable and preposterous. We mean the economic liberty of the masses, and for that very purpose we are striving to win the political power. No doubt in the beginning, we shall have to fight for little economic demands and privileges of these classes. But these struggles are the best means for educating them for a final struggle to conquer political power.

Apart from these, there shall necessarily be organised a military department. This is very important. At times its need is felt very badly. But at that time you cannot start and formulate such a group with substantial means to act effectively. Perhaps this is the topic that needs a careful explanation. There is very great probability of my being misunderstood on this subject. Apparently I have acted like a terrorist. But I am not a terrorist. I am a revolutionary who has got such definite ideas of a lengthy programme as is being discussed here. My "comrades in arms" might accuse me, like Ram Prasad Bismil, for having been subjected to certain sort of reaction in the condemned cell, which is not true. I have got the same ideas, same convictions, same zeal and same spirit as I used to have outside, perhaps—nay, decidedly—better. Hence I warn my readers to be careful while reading my words. They should not try to read anything between the lines. Let me announce with all the strength at my command, that I am not a terrorist and I never was, except perhaps in the beginning of my revolutionary career. And I am convinced that we cannot gain anything through those methods. One can easily judge it from

[3] Missing text.
[4] Unclear. Probably some missing text.

the history of the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association. All our activities were directed towards an aim, i.e., identifying ourselves with the great movement as its military wing. If anybody has misunderstood me, let him amend his ideas. I do not mean that bombs and pistols are useless, rather the contrary. But I mean to say that mere bomb-throwing is not only useless but sometimes harmful. The military department of the party should always keep ready all the war-material it can command for any emergency. It should back the political work of the party. It cannot and should not work independently.

On these lines indicated above, the party should proceed with its work. Through periodical meetings and conferences they should go on educating and enlightening their workers on all topics.

If you start the work on these lines, you shall have to be very sober. The programme requires at least twenty years for its fulfilment. Cast aside the youthful dreams of a revolution within ten years of Gandhi's Utopian promises of Swaraj in One Year. It requires neither the emotion nor the death, but the life of constant struggle, suffering and sacrifice. Crush your individuality first. Shake off the dreams of personal comfort. Then start to work. Inch by inch you shall have to proceed. It needs courage, perseverance and very strong determination. No difficulties and no hardships shall discourage you. No failure and betrayals shall dishearten you. No travails (!) imposed upon you shall snuff out the revolutionary will in you. Through the ordeal of sufferings and sacrifice you shall come out victorious. And these individual victories shall be the valuable assets of the revolution.

LONG LIVE REVOLUTION!

2nd February, 1931

Why I am an Atheist

A new question has cropped up.[1] Is it due to vanity that I do not believe in the existence of an omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient God? I had never imagined that I would ever have to confront such a question. But conversation with some friends has given me a hint that certain of my friends—if I am not claiming too much in thinking them to be so—are inclined to conclude from the brief contact they have had with me, that it was too much on my part to deny the existence of God and that there was a certain amount of vanity that actuated my disbelief. Well, the problem is a serious one. I do not boast to be quite above these human traits. I am a man and nothing more. None can claim to be more. I also have this weakness in me. Vanity does form a part of my nature. Amongst my comrades I was called an autocrat. Even my friend Mr. B.K. Dutta sometimes called me so. On certain occasions I was decried as a despot. Some friends do complain, and very seriously too, that I involuntarily thrust my opinions upon others and get my proposals accepted. That this is true up to a certain extent, I do not deny. This may amount to egotism. There is vanity in me inasmuch as our cult as opposed to other popular creeds is concerned. But that is not personal. It may be, it is only legitimate pride in our cult and does not amount to vanity. Vanity, or to be more precise "Ahankar", is the excess of undue pride in one's self. Whether it is such an undue pride that has led me to atheism or whether it is after very careful study of the subject and after much consideration that I have come to disbelieve in God, is a question that I intend to discuss here. Let me first make it clear that egotism and vanity are two different things.

In the first place, I have altogether failed to comprehend as to how undue pride or vaingloriousness could ever stand in the way of a man in believing in God. I can refuse to recognise the greatness of a really great man, provided I have also achieved a certain amount of popularity without deserving it or without having possessed the qualities really essential or indispensable for the

[1] Bhai Randhir Singh was a Ghadarite in Lahore Central Jail in 1930–31. Shiv Verma's annotation: "Baba Randhir Singh . . . was a God-fearing religious man. It pained him to learn that Bhagat Singh was a non-believer. He somehow managed to see Bhagat Singh in the condemned cell and tried to convince him about the existence of God, but failed. Baba lost his temper and said tauntingly: 'You are giddy with fame and have developed an ego which is standing like a black curtain between you and the God.'

"It was in reply to that remark that Bhagat Singh wrote this article."

same purpose. That much is conceivable. But in what way can a man believing in God cease believing due to his personal vanity? There are only two ways. The man should either begin to think himself a rival of God or he may begin to believe himself to be God. In neither case can he become a genuine atheist. In the first case he does not even deny the existence of his rival. In the second case as well, he admits the existence of a conscious being behind the screen, guiding all the movements of nature. It is of no importance to us whether he thinks himself to be that supreme being or whether he thinks the supreme conscious being to be somebody apart from himself. The fundamental is there. His belief is there. He is by no means an atheist. Well, here I am. I neither belong to the first category nor to the second. I deny the very existence of that Almighty Supreme Being. Why I deny it, shall be dealt with later on. Here I want to clear one thing, that it is not vanity that has actuated me to adopt the doctrines of atheism. I am neither a rival nor an incarnation, nor the Supreme Being Himself. One point is decided, that it is not vanity that has led me to this mode of thinking. Let me examine the facts to disprove this allegation. According to these friends of mine I have grown vainglorious perhaps due to the undue popularity gained during the trials—both Delhi Bomb and Lahore Conspiracy Cases. Well, let us see if their premises are correct. My atheism is not of so recent origin. I bad stopped believing in God when I was an obscure young man, of whose existence my above-mentioned friends were not even aware. At least a college student cannot cherish any short of undue pride which may lead him to atheism. Though a favourite with some professors and disliked by certain others. I was never an industrious or a studious boy. I could not get any chance of indulging in such feelings as vanity. I was rather a boy with a very shy nature, who had certain pessimistic dispositions about the future career. And in those days, I was not a perfect atheist. My grandfather under whose influence I was brought up is an orthodox Arya Samajist. An Arya Samajist is anything but an atheist. After finishing my primary education I joined the D.A.V. School of Lahore and stayed in its Boarding House for full one year. There, apart from morning and evening prayers, I used to recite "Gayatri Mantra" for hours and hours. I was a perfect devotee in those days. Later on I began to live with my father. He is a liberalinas much as the orthodoxy of religions is concerned. It was though his teachings that I aspired to devote my life to the cause of freedom. But he is not an atheist. He is a firm believer. He used to encourage me for offering prayers daily. So this is how I was brought up. In the Non-Cooperation days I joined the National College. It was there that I began to think liberally and discuss and criticise all the religious problems, even about God. But still I was a devout believer. By that

time I had begun to preserve the unshorn and unclipped long hair but I could never believe in the mythology and doctrines of Sikhism or any other religion. But I had a firm faith in God's existence.

Later on I joined the revolutionary party. The first leader with whom I came in contact, though not convinced, could not dare to deny the existence of God. On my persistent inquiries about God, he used to say: "Pray whenever you want to." Now this is atheism less courage required for the adoption of that creed. The second leader with whom I came in contact was a firm believer. Let me mention his name—respected Comrade Shachindra Nath Sanyal, now undergoing life transportation in connection with the Kakori Conspiracy Case. From the very first page of his famous and only book, *Bandi Jivan* (or Incarcerated Life), the Glory of God is sung vehemently. On the last page of the second part of that beautiful book, his mystic—because of vedantism—praises showered upon God form a very conspicuous part of his thoughts. "The Revolutionary leaflet" distributed throughout India on January 28th, 1925, was according to the prosecution story the result of his intellectual labour. Now, as is inevitable in the secret work the prominent leader expresses his own views which are very dear to his person, and the rest of the workers have to acquiesce in them, in spite of differences which they might have. In that leaflet one full paragraph was devoted to praise the Almighty and His rejoicings and doing. That is all mysticism. What I wanted to point out was that the idea of disbelief had not even germinated in the revolutionary party. The famous Kakori martyrs—all four of them—passed their last days in prayers. Ram Prasad Bismil was an orthodox Arya Samajist. Despite his wide studies in the field of socialism and communism, Rajen Lahiri could not suppress his desire of reciting hymns of the Upanishads and the Gita. I saw only one man amongst them, who never prayed and used to say: "Philosophy is the outcome of human weakness or limitation of knowledge." He is also undergoing a sentence of transportation for life. But he also never dared to deny the existence of God.

Up to that period I was only a romantic idealist revolutionary. Up till then we were to follow. Now came the time to shoulder the whole responsibility. Due to the inevitable reaction for some time the very existence of the party seemed impossible. Enthusiastic comrades—nay, leaders—began to jeer at us. For some time I was afraid that some day I also might not be convinced of the futility of our own programme. That was a turning point in my revolutionary career. "Study" was the cry that reverberated in the corridors of my mind. Study to enable yourself to face the arguments advanced by opposition. Study to arm yourself with arguments in favour of your cult. I began to study. My

previous faith and convictions underwent a remarkable modification. The romance of the violent methods alone which was so prominent amongst our predecessors, was replaced by serious ideas. No more mysticism, no more blind faith. Realism became our cult. Use of force justifiable when resorted to as a matter of terrible necessity: non-violence as policy indispensable for all mass movements. So much about methods. The most important thing was the clear conception of the ideal for which we were to fight. As there were no important activities in the field of action I got ample opportunity to study various ideals of the world revolution. I studied Bakunin, the anarchist leader, something of Marx, the father of communism, and much of Lenin, Trotsky and others—the men who had successfully carried out a revolution in their country. They were all atheists. Bakunin's *God and State* though only fragmentary, is an interesting study of the subject. Later still I came across a book entitled *Common Sense* by Nirlamba Swami. It was only a sort of mystic atheism. This subject became of utmost interest to me. By the end of 1926 I had been convinced as to the baselessness of the theory of existence of an almighty supreme being who created, guided and controlled the universe. I had given out this disbelief of mine I began discussion on the subjects with my friends. I had become a pronounced atheist. But what it meant will presently be discussed.

In May 1927 I was arrested at Lahore. The arrest was a surprise. I was quite unaware of the fact that the police wanted me. All of a sudden, while passing through a garden, I found myself surrounded by police. To my own surprise, I was very calm at that time. I did not feel any sensation, nor did I experience any excitement. I was taken into police custody. Next day I was taken to the Railway Police lock-up where I was to pass full one month. After many day's conversation with the police officials I guessed that they had some information regarding my connection with the Kakori party and my other activities in connection with the revolutionary movement. They told me that I had been to Lucknow while the trial was going on there, that I had negotiated a certain scheme about their rescue, that after obtaining their approval, we had procured some bombs, that by way of test one of the bombs was thrown in the crowd on the occasion of Dussehra 1926. They further informed me, in my interest, that if I could give any statement throwing some light on the activities of the revolutionary party, I was not to be imprisoned but on the contrary set free and rewarded, even without being produced as an approver in the court. I laughed at the proposal. It was all humbug. People holding ideas like ours do not throw bombs on their own innocent people. One fine morning Mr. Newman, the then Senior Superintendent of C.I.D.,

came to me. And after much sympathetic talk with me, imparted—to him the extremely sad—news that if I did not give any statement as demanded by them, they would be forced to send me up for trial for conspiracy to wage war in connection with Kakori Case and for brutal murders in connection with Dussehra bomb outrage. And he further informed me that they had evidence enough to get me convicted and hanged. In those days I believed—though I was quite innocent—the police could do it if they desired. That very day certain police officials began to persuade me to offer my prayers to God regularly, both the times. Now I was an atheist. I wanted to settle for myself whether it was in the days of peace and enjoyment alone that I could boast of being an atheist or whether during such hard times as well, I could stick to those principles of mine. After great consideration I decided that I could not lead myself to believe in and pray to God. No, I never did. That was the real test and I came out successful. Never for a moment did I desire to save my neck at the cost of certain other things. So I was a staunch disbeliever; and have ever since been. It was not an easy job to stand that test. 'Belief' softens the hardships, even can make them pleasant. In God man can find very strong consolation and support. Without Him man has to depend upon himself. To stand upon one's own legs amid storms and hurricanes is not a child's play. At such testing moments, vanity—if any—evaporates, and man cannot dare to defy the general beliefs. If he does, then we must conclude that he has got certain other strength than mere vanity. This is exactly the situation now. Judgement is already too well known. Within a week it is to be pronounced. What is the consolation with the exception of the idea that I am going to sacrifice my life for a cause? A God-believing Hindu might be expecting to be reborn as a king, a Muslim or a Christian might dream of the luxuries to be enjoyed in paradise and the reward he is to get for his suffering and sacrifices. But, what am I to expect? I know the moment the rope is fitted round my neck and rafters removed from under my feet, that will be the final moment—that will be the last moment. I, or to be more precise, my soul as interpreted in the metaphysical terminology shall all be finished there. Nothing further. A short life of struggle with no such magnificent end, shall in itself be the reward, if I have the courage to take it in that light. That is all. With no selfish motive or desire to be awarded here or hereafter, quite disinterestedly, have I devoted my life to the cause of independence, because I could not do otherwise. The day we find a great number of men and women with this psychology, who cannot devote themselves to anything else than the service of mankind and emancipation of the suffering humanity, that day shall inaugurate the era of liberty. Not to become a king, nor to gain any other rewards here, or in the

next birth or after death in paradise, shall they be inspired to challenge the oppressors, exploiters, and tyrants, but to cast off the yoke of serfdom from the neck of humanity and to establish liberty and peace shall they tread this—to their individual selves perilous and to their nobel selves the only glorious imaginable—path. Is the pride in their noble cause to be misinterpreted as vanity? Who dares to utter such an abominable epithet? To him I say either he is a fool or a knave. Let us forgive him for he cannot realise the depth, the emotion, the sentiment and the noble feelings that surge in that heart. His heart is dead as a mere lump of flesh, his eyes are weak, the evils of other interests having been cast over them. Self-reliance is always liable to be interpreted as vanity. It is sad and miserable but there is no help.

You go and oppose the prevailing faith, yon go and criticise a hero, a great man who is generally believed to be above criticism because he is thought to be infallible, the strength of your argument shall force the multitude to decry you as vainglorious. This is due to the mental stagnation. Criticism and independent thinking are the two indispensable qualities of a revolutionary. Because Mahatmaji is great, therefore none should criticise him. Because he has risen above, therefore everything he says—may be in the field of Politics or Religion, Economics or Ethics—is right. Whether you are convinced or not you must say: "Yes, that's true". This mentality does not lead towards progress. It is rather too obviously reactionary.

Because our forefathers had set up a faith in some supreme being—the Almighty God—therefore, any man who dares to challenge the validity of that faith, or the very existence of that supreme being, he shall have to be called an apostate, a renegade. If his arguments are too sound to be refuted by counter-arguments and spirit too strong to be cowed down by the threat of misfortunes that may befall him by the wrath of the Almighty, he shall be decried as vainglorious, his spirit to be denominated as vanity. Then, why to waste time in this vain discussion? Why try to argue out the whole thing? This question is coming before the public for the first time, and is being handled in this matter of fact way for the first time, hence this lengthy discussion.

As for the first question, I think I have cleared that it is not vanity that has led me to atheism. My way of argument has proved to be convincing or not, that is to be judged by my readers, not me. I know in the present circumstances my faith in God would have made my life easier, my burden lighter, and my disbelief in Him has turned all the circumstances too dry, and the situation may assume too harsh a shape. A little bit of mysticism can make it poetical. But I do not want the help of any intoxication to meet my fate. I am a realist.

I have been trying to overpower the instinct in me by the help of reason. I have not always been successful in achieving this end. But man's duty is to try and endeavour, success depends upon chance and environments.

As for the second question that if it was not vanity, then there ought to be some reason to disbelieve the old and still prevailing faith of the existence of God. Yes, I come to that now. Reason there is. According to me, any man who has got some reasoning power at his command always tries to reason out his environments. Where direct proofs are lacking philosophy occupies the important place. As I have already stated, a certain revolutionary friend used to say that philosophy is the outcome of human weakness. When our ancestors had leisure enough to try to solve out the mystery of this world, its past, present and the future, its whys and wherefores, they having been terribly short of direct proofs, everybody tried to solve the problem in his own way. Hence we find the wide differences in the fundamentals of various religious creeds, which sometimes assume very antagonistic and conflicting shapes. Not only the Oriental and Occidental philosophies differ, there are differences even amongst various schools of thought in each hemisphere. Amongst Oriental religions, the Moslem faith is not at all compatible with Hindu faith. In India alone Buddhism and Jainism are sometimes quite separate from Brahmanism, in which there are again conflicting faiths as Arya Samaj and Sanatan Dharma. Charwak is still another independent thinker of the past ages. He challenged the authority of God in the old times. All these creeds differ from each other on the fundamental question; and everybody considers himself to be on the right. There lies the misfortune. Instead of using the experiments and expressions of the ancient Savants and thinkers as a basis for our future struggle against ignorance and to try to find out a solution to this mysterious problem, we, lethargical as we have proved to be, raise the hue and cry of faith, unflinching and unwavering faith to their versions and thus are guilty of stagnation in human progress.

Any man who stands for progress has to criticise, disbelieve and challenge every item of the old faith. Item by item he has to reason out every nook and corner of the prevailing faith. If after considerable reasoning one is led to believe in any theory or philosophy, his faith is welcomed. His reasoning can be mistaken, wrong, misled, and sometimes fallacious. But he is liable to correction because reason is the guiding star of his life. But mere faith and blind faith is dangerous: it dulls the brain, and makes a man reactionary. A man who claims to be a realist has to challenge the whole of the ancient faith. If it does not stand the onslaught of reason it crumbles down. Then the first thing for him is to shatter the whole down and clear a space for the erection of

a new philosophy. This is the negative side. After it begins the positive work in which sometimes some material of the old faith may be used for the purpose of reconstruction. As far as I am concerned, let me admit at the very outset that I have not been able to study much on this point. I had a great desire to study the Oriental philosophy but I could not get any chance or opportunity to do the same. But so far as the negative study is under discussion, I think I am convinced to the extent of questioning the soundness of the old faith. I have been convinced as to non-existence of a conscious supreme being who is guiding and directing the movements of nature. We believe in nature and the whole progressive movement aims at the domination of man over nature for his service. There is no conscious power behind it to direct. This is what our philosophy is.

As for the negative side, we ask a few questions from the 'believers'.

(1) If, as you believe, there is an almighty, omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent God, who created the earth or world, please let me know why did he create it? This world of woes and miseries, a veritable, eternal combination of numberless tragedies: Not a single soul being perfectly satisfied.

Pray, don't say that it is His Law. If he is bound by any law, he is not omnipotent. He is another slave like ourselves. Please don't say that it is his enjoyment. Nero burnt one Rome. He killed a very limited number of people. He created very few tragedies, all to his perfect enjoyment. And, what is his place in History? By what names do the historians mention him? All the venomous epithets are showered upon him. Pages are blackened with invective diatribes condemning Nero, the tyrant, the heartless, the wicked. One Changezkhan sacrificed a few thousand lives to seek pleasure in it and we hate the very name. Then, how are you going to justify your almighty, eternal Nero, who has been, and is still causing numberless tragedies every day, every hour and every minute? How do you think to support his misdoings which surpass those of Changez every single moment? I say why did he create this world—a veritable hell, a place of constant and bitter unrest? Why did the Almighty create man when he had the power not to do it? What is the justification for all this? Do you say, to award the innocent sufferers hereafter and to punish the wrongdoers as well? Well, well: How far shall you justify a man who may dare to inflict wounds upon your body to apply a very soft and soothing ointment upon it afterwards? How far the supporters and organisers of the Gladiator institution were justified in throwing men before the half-starved furious lions to be cared for and well looked after if they could survive and could manage to escape death by the wild beasts? That is. why I ask: Why did the conscious supreme being create this world and man in it? To

seek pleasure? Where, then, is the difference between him and Nero?

You Mohammadans and Christians: Hindu philosophy shall still linger on to offer another argument. I ask you, what is your answer to the above-mentioned question? You don't believe in previous birth. Like Hindus, you cannot advance the argument of previous misdoings of the apparently quite innocent sufferers. I ask you, why did the omnipotent labour for six days to create the world through word and each day to say that all was well? Call him today. Show him the past history. Make him study the present situation. Let us see if he dares to say: "All is well."

From the dungeons of prisons, from the stores of starvation consuming millions upon millions of human beings in slums and huts, from the exploited labourers, patiently or say apathetically watching the procedure of their blood being sucked by the capitalist vampires, and the wastage of human energy that will make a man with the least common sense shiver with horror, and from the preference of throwing the surplus of production in oceans rather than to distribute amongst the needy producers —to the palaces of kings built upon the foundation laid with human bones.... let him see all this and let him say: "All is well." Why and wherefore? That is my question. You are silent. Alright then, I proceed.

Well, you Hindus, you say all the present sufferers belong to the class of sinners of the previous births. Good. You say the present oppressors were saintly people in their previous births, hence they enjoy power. Let me admit that your ancestors were very shrewd people, they tried to find out theories strong enough to hammer down all the efforts of reason and disbelief. But let us analyse how far this argument can really stand.

From the point of view of the most famous jurists, punishment can be justified only from three or four ends, to meet which it is inflicted upon the wrongdoer. They are retributive, reformative and deterrent. The retributive theory is now being condemned by all the advanced thinkers. Deterrent theory is also following the same fate. Reformative theory is the only one which is essential and indispensable for human progress. It aims at returning the offender as a most competent and a peace-loving citizen to the society. But, what is the nature of punishment inflicted by God upon men, even if we suppose them to be offenders? You say he sends them to be born as a cow, a cat, a tree, a herb or a beast. You enumerate these punishments to be 84 lakhs. I ask you: what is its reformative effect upon man? How many men have met you who say that. they were born as a donkey in previous birth for having committed any sin? None. Don't quote your Puranas. I have no scope to touch your mythologies. Moreover, do you know that the greatest sin in this world is to

be poor? Poverty is a sin, it is a punishment. I ask you how far would you appreciate a criminologist, a jurist or a legislator who proposes such measures of punishment which shall inevitably force men to commit more offences? Had not your God thought of this, or he also had to learn these things by experience, but at the cost of untold sufferings to be borne by humanity? What do you think shall be the fate of a man who has been born in a poor and illiterate family of, say, a *chamar* or a sweeper? He is poor, hence he cannot study. He is hated and shunned by his fellow human beings who think themselves to be his superiors having been born in, say, a higher caste. His ignorance, his poverty and the treatment meted out to him shall harden his heart towards society. Suppose he commits a sin, who shall bear the consequences? God, he or the learned ones of the society? What about the punishment of those people who were deliberately kept ignorant by the haughty and egotist Brahmans, and who had to pay the penalty by bearing the stream of being led (not lead) in their ears for having heard a few sentences of your Sacred Books of learning—the Vedas? If they committed any offence, who was to be responsible for them and who was to bear the brunt? My dear friends, these theories are the inventions of the privileged ones; they justify their usurped power, riches and superiority by the help of these theories. Yes, it was perhaps Upton Sinclair that wrote at some place that just make a man a believer in immortality and then rob him of all his riches and possessions. He shall help you even in that ungrudgingly. The coalition among the religious preachers and possessors of power brought forth jails, gallows, knouts and these theories.

I ask why your omnipotent God does not stop every man when he is committing any sin or offence? He can do it quite easily. Why did he not kill warlords or kill the fury of war in them and thus avoid the catastrophe hurled down on the head of humanity by the Great War? Why does he not just produce a certain sentiment in the mind of the British people to liberate India? Why does he not infuse the altruistic enthusiasm in the hearts of all capitalists to forego their rights of personal possessions of means of production and thus redeem the whole labouring community, nay, the whole human society, from the bondage of capitalism? You want to reason out the practicability of socialist theory, I leave it for your almighty to enforce it. People recognise the merits of socialism inasmuch as the general welfare is concerned. They oppose it under the pretext of its being impracticable. Let the Almighty step in and arrange everything in an orderly fashion. Now don't try to advance round about arguments, they are out of order. Let me tell you, British rule is here not because God wills it, but because they possess power and we do not dare to

oppose them. Not that it is with the help of God that they are keeping us under their subjection, but it is with the help of guns and rifles, bomb and bullets, police and militia, and our apathy, that they are successfully committing the most deplorable sin against society—the ourtrageous exploitation of one nation by another. Where is God? What is he doing? Is he enjoying all these woes of human race? A Nero, a Changez: Down with him.

Do you ask me how I explain the origin of this world and origin of man? Alright, I tell you, Charles Darwin has tried to throw some light on the subject. Study him. Read Soham Swami's *Common Sense*. It shall answer your question to some extent. This is a phenomenon of nature. The accidental mixture of different substances in the shape of nebulace produced this earth. When? Consult history. The same process produced animals and, in the long run, man. Read Darwin's *Origin of Species*. And all the later progress is due to man's constant conflict with nature and his efforts to override it. This, is the briefest possible explanation of the phenomenon.

Your other argument may be just to ask why a child is born blind or lame if not due to his deeds committed in the previous birth? This problem has been explained away by biologists as a mere biological phenomenon. According to them the whole burden rests upon the shoulders of the parents who may be conscious or ignorant of their own deeds which led to mutilation of the child previous to its birth.

Naturally, you may ask another question, though it is quite childish in essence. If no God existed, how did the people come to believe in him? My answer is clear and brief. As they came to. believe in ghosts and evil spirits; the only difference is that belief in God is almost universal and the philosophy well developed. Unlike certain of the radicals I would not attribute its origin to the ingenuity of the exploiters who wanted to keep the people under their subjection by preaching the existence of a supreme being and then claiming an authority and sanction from him for their privileged positions, though I do not differ with them on the essential point that all faiths, religions, creeds and such other institutions became in turn the mere supporters of the tyrannical and exploiting institutions, men and classes. Rebellion against king is always a sin, according to every religion.

As regards the origin of God, my own idea is that having realised the limitations of man, his weaknesses and shortcoming having been taken into consideration, God was brought into imaginary existence to encourage man to face boldly all the trying circumstances, to meet all dangers manfully and to check and restrain his outbursts in prosperity and affluence. God, both with his private laws and parental generosity, was imagined and painted in greater

details. He was to serve as a deterrent factor when his fury and private laws were discussed, so that man may not become a danger to society. He was to serve as a father, mother, sister and brother, friend and helper, when his parental qualifications were to be explained. So that when man be in great distress, having been betrayed and deserted by all friends, he may find consolation in the idea that an ever true friend, was still there to help him, to support him and that he was almighty and could do anything. Really that was useful to the society in the primitive age. The idea of God is helpful to man in distress.

Society has to fight out this belief as well as was fought the idol worship and the narrow conception of religion. Similarly, when man tries to stand on his own legs and become a realist, he shall have to throw the faith aside, and to face manfully all the distress, trouble, in which the circumstances may throw him. That is exactly my state of affairs. It. is not my vanity, my friends. It is my mode of thinking that has made me an atheist. I don't know whether in my case belief in God and offering of daily prayers which 1 consider to be most selfish and degraded act on the part of man, whether these prayers, can prove to be helpful or they shall make my case worse still. I have read of atheists facing all troubles quite boldly; so am I trying to stand like a man with an erect head to the last, even on the gallows.

Let us see how I carry on. One friend asked me to pray. When informed of my atheism, he said: "During your last days you will begin to believe." I said: "No, dear Sir, it shall not be. I will think that to be an act of degradation and demoralisation on my part. For selfish motives I am not going to pray." Readers and friends: Is this "vanity"? If it is, I stand for it.

No Hanging, Please Shoot Us

To
The Punjab Governor

Sir
With due respect we beg to bring to your kind notice the following.

That we were sentenced to death on 7th October 1930 by a British court, L.C.C. Tribunal, constituted under the Special L.C.C. Ordinance, promulgated by H.E. The Viceroy, the head of the British Government in India, and the main charge against us was that of having waged war against H.M. King George, the King of England.

The above mentioned findings of the court presupposed two things:

First, that there exists a state of war between the British nation and the Indian nation and, secondly, that we had actually participated in that war and were, therefore, war prisoners.

The second presupposition seems to be a little bit flattering, but nevertheless it is too tempting to resist the design acquiescing in it.

As regards the first, we are constrained to go into some details. Apparently there seems to be no such war as the phrase indicated. Nevertheless, please, allow us to accept the validity of the presupposition, taking it at its face value. But in order to be correctly understood we must explain it further. Let us declare that the state of war does exist ad shall exist so long as the Indian toiling masses and their natural resources are being exploited by a handful of parasites. They may be purely British capitalists or mixed British and Indian, or even purely Indian. They may be carrying on their insidious exploitation through mixed or even purely Indian bureaucratic apparatus. All these things make no difference. No matter if your government tries and succeeds in winning over the leaders of the upper strata of the Indian society through petty concessions and compromises and thereby cause a temporary demoralisation in the main body of the forces. No matter if once again the vanguard of the Indian movement, the revolutionary party finds itself deserted into the thick of the war. No matter if the leaders to whom personally we are much indebted for the sympathy and feelings they expressed for us, but nevertheless we cannot overlook the fact that they did become so callous as to ignore and not to make a mention in the peace negotiations of even the homeless, friendless and penniless female workers who are alleged to be

belonging to the vanguard and whom the leaders consider to be the enemies of their utopian non-violent cult which has already become a thing of the past, the heroines who have unimagingly sacrificed or offered for sacrifice their husbands, brothers and all that were nearest and dearest to them, including themselves, whom your government has declared to be outlaws. No matter if your agents stoop so low as to fabricate baseless calumnies against their spotless character to damage their and their party's reputation. This war shall continue.

It may assume different shapes at different times. It may become now open, now hidden, now purely agitational, now fierce life and death struggle. The choice, of course, whether bloody or comparatively peaceful which way it should adopt, rests with you. Choose whatever you like. But that war shall be incessantly waged without taking into consideration the petty . . .[1] and the meaningless ethical ideologies. It shall be waged ever with new vigour, greater audacity and unflinching determination till the socialist republic is established and the present social order is completely replaced by a new social order, based on social prosperity, and thus every sort of exploitation is put an end to and humanity is ushered into the era of genuine and permanent peace. In the very near future the final battle shall be fought and final settlement arrived at.

The days of capitalist and imperialist exploitation are numbered. The war neither began with us nor is it going to end with our lives. It is the inevitable consequence of the historic events and the existing environments. Our humble sacrifices shall be only a link in the chain that has very accurately been beautified by the unparalleled sacrifice of Mr. Das and the most tragic but noblest sacrifice of Comrade Bhagwati Charan and the glorious death of our dear warrior Azad.

As to the question of our fate, please allow us to say that when you have decided to put us to death, you will certainly do it. You have got the power in your hands and power is the greatest justification in the world. We know the maxim "might is right" serves as your guiding motto. The whole of our trial was just a proof of that.

What we wanted to point out was that according to the verdict of your court we had waged war and we are therefore war prisoners. And we claim to be treated as such, i.e., we claim to be shot dead instead of being hanged. It rests with you to prove that you really meant what your court has said.

[1] Words not legible.

We request and hope that you will kindly order the military department to send its detachment to perform our execution.

Yours, etc.
Bhagat Singh
Raj Guru
Sukhdev

Letter to the Second Lahore Conspiracy Case Convicts

March 22, 1931

Comrades,[1]

The desire to live is natural. It is in me also. I do not want to conceal it. But it is conditional. I don't want to live as a prisoner or under restrictions. My name has become a symbol of Indian revolution. The ideal and sacrifices of the revolutionary party have elevated me to a height beyond which I will never be able to rise if I live.

Today people do not know my weaknesses. If I escape gallows those weaknesses will come before them and the symbol of revolution will get tarnished or perhaps it may vanish altogether. On the other hand, if I mount the gallows boldly and with a smile, that will inspire Indian mothers and they will aspire that their children should also become Bhagat Singh. Thus the number of persons ready to sacrifice their lives for the freedom of our country will increase enormously. It will then become impossible for imperialism to face the tide of the revolution, and all their might and their satanic efforts will not be able to stop its onward march.

Yes, one thing pricks me even today. My heart nurtured some ambitions for doing something for humanity and for my country. I have not been able to fulfill even one thousandth part of those ambitions. If I live I might perhaps get a chance to fulfill them. If ever it came to my mind that I should not die, it came from this end only.

I am proud of myself these days and I am anxiously waiting for the final test. I wish the day may come nearer soon.

Your comrade
Bhagat Singh

[1] This is Bhagat Singh's last letter, written a day before his execution. Shiv Verma's annotation: "On March 22, the Second Lahore Conspiracy Case convicts, who were locked up in Ward Number 14 (near condemned cells), sent a slip to Bhagat Singh asking if would like to live. This letter was in reply to that slip." Bhagat Singh wrote this in Urdu.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

Labour Gov't Executes 3 India Rebels

Frame-up Revolutionists For British Imperialism

(Cable By Inprecorr.)

LONDON, March 24.—The three Lahore prisoners, Bhagat Singh, Raj Guru and Sukh Dev, fighters for the Independence of India, have been executed by the British labour government in the interest of British imperialism. This is one of the bloodiest deeds ever undertaken by the British labour government, under the leadership of MacDonald.

The Indian National Congress opens at Karachi on Thursday. Indignation against the executions is causing mass opposition to the Gandhi–Irwin agreement. The Punjab members of the legislature propose an adjournment and censure of the government for the execution. The London press declares the Karachi congress is the supreme test of Gandhi's authority and doubts Gandhi's success.

* * *

The execution of the three Indian revolutionists, on a deliberate political frame-up, at the orders of the labor government, shows the lengths to which the MacDonald regime will go to save British imperialism in India. The MacDonald government, which weeps bitter tears over the trial of the counter-revolutionary Mensheviks in the Soviet Union who received splendid treatment although they plotted for war against the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union, deliberately fosters the most brutal tortures against Indian revolutionaries.

The three executed Indian revolutionists were arrested on the charge of setting off a bomb last April, as well as for the murder of Lieutenant Saunders, a police official, who had beaten thousands and killed many Indian workers.

Against the suspects arrested, the labor government vented its wrath and hate. All of the prisoners were beaten and tortured through special methods invented by the British imperialists and the 'labor' administrators, Jatin Das, one of the accused, who died before he could be executed, was tortured for 63 days. He was paralyzed and blinded by the torture. His blood circulation had stopped except around his heart. His body was reduced to 19 pounds at his

death. His funeral was attended by 50,000 bearing slogans and banners, saying: "Long Live the Revolution," and "Down With Imperialism."

The other prisoners were all tortured and beaten repeatedly. They were handcuffed and flogged by the "civilizers" of the British labor government. One Indian paper describes the tortures as follows:

"Each prisoner was assaulted by at least 20 to 25 policemen, the methods of assault being most inhuman." (The actual details are unprintable.) "One method employed was the penetration of the fingers into the rectum and kicking the private parts. The assault continued for more than one hour, after which five prisoners got fever; all others had acute pains in different parts of the body. Mahabi Singh and Raj Guru fell down senseless on the spot. Canes were frequently used, and marks can be actually seen on these prisoners."

Now they are executed. The "socialist" leaders of British imperialist government go to all lengths to stop the rising tide of revolution. Neither they nor their bourgeois tool, Gandhi, nor all their tortures and killings will be able to stop the growing struggles of the great masses of Indian workers and peasants.

[*Daily Worker* (New York), No. 73, March 25, 1931]

APPENDIX 2

75 Killed; 500 Hurt by Labor Gov't Soldiers

Fighting Spreading in India; Gandhi for Real Betrayal

(Cable by Inprecorr)

BERLIN, March 26.—A rigid censorship has been clamped down in Cawnpore, India, by the British labor government to prevent the truth of the widespread fighting from being known.

Seventy-five are already dead and at least 500 have been wounded. An exodus of 30,000 people took place from the city last night, due to the fighting. Large British military forces, are enforcing martial law. All railroad bookings to Cawnpore have been stopped, unless a special permit is issued.

New fighting has started in the Tharawaddy forest where two British platoons were reported to have killed 22 rebels. The outbreak is spreading. Reinforcements, including armored trains are being rushed by the British to the affected district.

* * *

The fighting in Cawnpore followed the lynching by the British imperialist labor government of three Indian revolutionists, after they had been frightfully tortured.

Latest reports from Karachi, India, by the Associated Press and the United Press tell of the growing opposition to Gandhi. Gandhi is trying to put over his sell-out with Lord Irwin, British viceroy of India, by all means, threatening to retire for life if the betrayal is not accepted.

The United Press staff correspondent in Karachi where the Indian National Congress is meeting writes:

"The independence leader, who was the object of hostile demonstrations by 'red shirts' throughout last night, told newspapermen that the execution of Nationalist extremists at Lahore had not affected his position toward the peace settlement." That is to say, Gandhi's object is to do the dirty work for

British imperialism, despite everything. He said that the British government had "committed a first-class blunder," making it harder for Gandhi to put over the sell-out.

Refused an interview with Gandhi or his lieutenant, Jawaharlal Nehru, who is parading as a "left," the "red shirt" representatives departed shouting: "Who killed Bhagat Singh?" and answering, "Gandhi! Gandhi!"

More "red shirts" are arriving at Karachi. The "red shirts" are a militant youth organization who do not approve of Gandhi's program of uniting with the British imperialists.

Not only are there reports of fighting in Cawnpore and the Tharawaddy forest as well as the Insein regions, but mass demonstrations are taking place in Bombay and Calcutta.

[*Daily Worker* (New York), No. 75, March 27, 1931]

APPENDIX 3

Editorial, *Kudi Arasu*, March 29, 1931

By Periyar E.V. Ramasami

There is no one who has not condoled the death of Mr. Bhagat Singh by hanging. There is none who has not condemned the government for hanging him. Besides, we now see several people known as patriots and national heroes scolding Mr. Gandhi for the happening of this event.

While this happens in one place, let us see what the same group of people do in another place. They congratulate Lord Irwin, the Viceroy. They praise Mr. Gandhi for coming to an agreement with him. They are not only satisfied that the agreement has been reached without laying down the condition of not to hang Bhagat Singh, but also consider the signing of such an agreement as a great victory and celebrate the same. In addition, Mr. Gandhi says that Lord Irwin is a Mahatma (great soul), and has ordered the common people of the country to address the Viceroy the same way. Lord Irwin publicises Mr. Gandhi among the white people as a great man endowed with divinity.

The same people who have been hailing Mr. Gandhi as a great leader are now shouting 'down with Gandhi' and 'down with Congress'. They show black flags wherever he goes, and disturb the meetings he addresses. These things have become common.

When we witness these things we are at a loss to find out either the opinion of the public or the principle they entertain regarding political affairs. We also doubt if they really adhere to any principle.

Whatever be the position of the public, even when Gandhi started the agitation of Salt Satyagraha, we explained elaborately that it would not only be of use to the people, but also hostile to the progress of the country and to the liberation of the suffering class.

Even Gandhi has said clearly and openly admitting that the reason for starting the agitation had been to spoil and undo the work done by persons like Bhagat Singh.

To supplement (these things), the real socialists among the neighbours have been proclaiming loudly: "Mr. Gandhi has betrayed the poor. He does these things to eradicate the socialist principles. Down with Gandhi, down with Congress." But our known national heroes and patriots never cared for these reactions. They did not realise the pros and cons of anything. Like those

who fall into the well holding the lamp, like those who dash against the rock accepting the challenge, they were blindly and wildly enthusiastic (about the Salt Agitation). They went to prison and returned 'triumphantly'. They accepted the honour connected with it. And now, after finding Bhagat Singh hanged, they also shout, 'Down with Gandhi', 'Down with Congress'. We do not understand what benefit will ensue due to such behaviour.

As far as we are concerned, let us tell the truth: There are idiots and fools in this land. They do not think of the pros and cons of a course of action, but selfishly seek their own honour. Had Bhagat Singh lived long, he would have to suffer every second the agony of witnessing the activities of such people. Instead, it is good that Bhagat Singh is dead and has found 'peace'. I am sad that I cannot get such a great rare chance (*paeru*).

The issue is whether a man has done his duty or not. The issue is not whether the action has borne fruit. Yet we agree that we should do our duty taking into account the time and place. We are sure that time, place and general trend are not hostile to the principle upheld by Bhagat Singh. Though it occurs to our mind that he has erred a little in choosing the means to translate his principle into practice, we will never at any time be emboldened to say that his principle is a flawed one. It alone will make peace prevail in this world.

If Bhagat Singh had come to the firm and sincere conclusion that all his principles were correct, and that the methods he used were the just ones, then he should have definitely conducted himself only in the way he had done. If he had not so conducted himself, we could not say he was an honest person. So we now say that he is a true man. It is our strong view that only Bhagat Singh's principle is needed to India.

As far as we know Bhagat Singh's principle represented socialism and communism. As an evidence to this view, we find the following lines in the letter he wrote to the governor for the province of the Punjab:

"Till Communist Party comes to power and people live without unequal status, our struggle will continue: it cannot be brought to an end by killing us; it will continue openly and secretly."

Further, we think that Bhagat Singh had no faith in god and in divine dispensation, but was a man of self-confidence. Holding such views is not a crime under any law. Even if it is considered to be against any law, no one need to be afraid of it because, we are sure, that following those principles (that Bhagat Singh upheld) will not do any harm or cause any loss to the public. If by chance any harm or loss takes place, it will be unintentional. We endevour to put the principle into practice wholeheartedly, without entertaining

personal hatred towards individuals or towards communities or towards the people of any other land. We do our work without causing injury to any person, but we are ready to undergo extreme suffering for the cause we espouse. So we need not worry about or [be] afraid of anything.

The same philosophy that underlies our endevour to eradicate untouchability also forms the basis of the efforts to remove poverty. To abolish untouchability we have to abolish the principle of upper and lower castes. In the same manner, to remove poverty we have to do away with the principle of capitalists and wage-earners. So socialism and communism are nothing but getting rid of these concepts and systems. These are the principles Bhagat Singh stood for. It is no wonder that those who consider them just and necessary call for the downfall of Gandhi and Congress. What is very strange is that those who advocate these principles hail Gandhi and Congress.

The day when Gandhi said that god alone guides him, that *Varnashrama Dharma* is a superior system fit to govern the affairs of the world, and that everything happens according to god's will, we came to the conclusion that there is no difference between Gandhism and Brahminism. We also concluded that unless the Congress Party that subscribes to such philosophy and principle is abolished, it will not be good to the country. But now this fact has been found out at least by some of the people. They have gained the wisdom and courage to call for the downfall of Gandhism. This is a great victory to our cause. If Bhagat Singh had not died by being hanged, these would not have been any chance for this victory to take place in such a popular manner. We even venture to say that Gandhism would have gained more ground if Bhagat Singh had not been hanged.

Bhagat Singh had not fallen sick, suffered and died as it normally happens with people. He gave his life for the noble cause of showing to India, nay to the world, the path of real equality and peace. He has reached a great height, a feat never achieved normally by any one else. We applaud and sing of his martyrdom from the depth of our heart. At the same time, we request those in our government to find out and hang four true persons like Bhagat Singh in each of the provinces.

[According to the text published in *The Modern Rationalist*, November 2006.]

CHAMAN LAL is a Professor at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, and editor of *Bhagat Singh Aur Unke Sathiyon ke Dastavez*, the collected works of Bhagat Singh and his comrades.

BHUPENDER HOOJA (1922-2006) was a student activist in the revolutionary movement in the 1940s, and had a distinguished career as a journalist and broadcaster, and later as an administrator.

Back cover: Page 48 of Bhagat Singh's Jail Notebook.

Internationale

Arise, ye prisoners of starvation!
Arise ye wretched on earth,
For justice thunders condemnation,
A better world's in birth.
No more traditions chains shall bind us,
Arise, ye slaves! no more in thrall!
The earth shall rise on new foundations,
We have been naught, we be all.

[Refrain]

It is the final conflict;
Let each stand in his place,
The Internationale Party
Shall be the human race.

Behold them seated in their glory,
The kings of mine and rail and soil!
What would you read in all their story
But how they plundered toil?
Fruits of people's work are buried
In the strong coffers of a few;
But voting for their restitution,
The men will ask only their due.

[Same Refrain]

Toilers from shops and fields united,
The party we of all who work;
The earth belongs to us, the people,
No room here for the shirk.
How many on our flesh have fattened?
But if the noisome birds of prey,
Shall vanish from our sky some morning
The blessed daylight shall

[Same as]

Left Word
978-81-87496-62-5
₹ 250
www.leftword.com